

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 13 September 1990

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

Chairman:
Mr M.J. Evans

Members:
Mr S.J. Baker
Mr M.K. Brindal
Mr M.R. De Laine
Mr K.C. Hamilton
Mr V.S. Heron
Mr R.B. Such

The Committee met at 11 a.m.

The CHAIRMAN: I remind members of the Committee that any changes to the membership must be notified to the Chair as and when they occur during the day. The Minister and his advisers should take note of the fact that any additional information which may be provided in a written form in response to questions should, if possible, be submitted no later than Friday 28 September to enable it to be incorporated in *Hansard*.

The usual procedure is for members to ask three questions each and for questions to alternate from side to side, but brief supplementary questions to follow a particular line of questioning may be allowed so that matters can be fully debated. It would assist the Committee if members grouped their questions so that similar matters can be considered together. The education line is a fairly broad one, so questions may be asked at any time. When introducing the line I will refer to the relevant pages of the Estimates of Payments and also the Estimates of Receipts because, as members would be aware, Standing Orders have been suspended to allow the Estimates Committees to ask for explanations in respect of receipts.

Education, \$855 037 000

Witness:

The Hon. G.J. Crafter, Minister of Education.

Departmental Advisers:

Dr K.G. Boston, Director-General of Education.
Ms H.H. Kolbe, Associate Director-General (Resources).
Mr R.G. Boomer, Associate Director-General (Curriculum).
Mr P.G. Edwards, Assistant Director-General (Schools).
Mr J.B. Wauchope, Director of Personnel.
Mr B. Treloar, Assistant Director (Finance).

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to pages 71 to 75 of the Estimates of Payments and page 34 of the Estimates of Receipts.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I have distributed, as I do each year, a statistical summary. It is not directly related to the Estimates that we have before us, but it does provide an overall picture of the expenditure school by school of the Education Department. By way of introductory remarks I

will comment generally on the school budget for education in South Australia. The Government has given a high priority to education in a most difficult and complex budgetary situation. Once again, the amount that is to be spent in this budget per student, which is the traditional indicator that is used, provides for a further real increase of \$105 per annum, per student bringing that figure to some \$4 715 per student. I know that figure is used in the community to judge education expenditure each year.

By contrast, other States which are also facing similar economic difficulties have taken widely differing approaches to the provision of education. For example, there has been a very substantial reduction in the Victorian budget in the provision for schools and particularly a reduction of some 3 600 positions in the Education Department. It might be of interest to members to know that 1 620 of those are secondary teachers, 1 150 are administration and curriculum positions, many of which are teachers, and 1 200 are other positions in the Education Department in that State. That will have an effect on the outcome of the quality of education and on the outcome of working conditions for teachers.

For example, class sizes in technical schools in Victoria will increase by 30 per cent, and class sizes for years 7 to 10 will be increased to 26 students on average. So some very rigorous decisions have been taken in that State with respect to education. One of those decisions that I noted with some alarm was the elimination or the deferral of any payments for what we would call the school card, formerly the Government assistance allowance for students. In Victoria that allowance of \$100 has been deferred indefinitely.

In New South Wales the budget was brought down just this week, and it provides for a substantial *status quo* situation for education in that State. There was a slight reduction in recurrent expenditure and an overall slight increase in expenditure for education, although that is in the context of some 2 000 teaching positions being lost in that State in recent years. That also includes the recently announced salary increase for teachers in that State. In Queensland there has been an increase in Government expenditure on education and a number of very important equity programs and other programs, for example, the teaching of languages other than English, have been increased. I guess the Government has taken a decision to do something about the very low base of expenditure that was provided for education over a very long period in that State.

In Western Australia the budget has not yet been brought down but I understand, informally, that it will be a tough budget given the financial stringencies evident in that State. In Tasmania the reduction in education expenditure was 8.3 per cent. Whilst we do not have specific details, I understand that that involves a reduction of some 1 000 teaching positions in that State and a number of other very significant reductions in education. So I indicate that South Australia's education budget is brought down at a time when the majority of other States are reducing expenditure on education. That is not the case in this State—we have given education a high priority. The additional resources that are required for the teacher salary increases to bring those salaries to the national benchmark level are not included in this budget. They are provided for in the round sum allowances, as are other salary increases. However, when added to this budget they will significantly increase the overall per capita expenditure per student in our schools.

Mr S.J. BAKER: I wish to make a few brief comments about the procedures to be adopted in this Committee for the answering of questions. Last year in this Committee the Hon. Mr Wotton asked a question of the Minister about

committees in the Education Department. The *Hansard* report shows the Minister as saying, 'I will undertake to provide that information.' As is the normal practice, that answer should have been submitted two weeks later, by Friday 29 September. The Minister responded by saying that further research was needed to provide a reply.

On 17 October, during debate on the Appropriation Bill, my colleague, the Hon. Robert Lucas, sought an answer to this question from the Minister and again the Minister's staff promised that a reply would be sent to the honourable member within a few days. In February this year the Hon. Mr Lucas spoke to a staff member in the Minister's office about this question and again a reply was promised. Some 12 months later we have still not received a reply to that question.

These Estimates Committees will work only if members can be assured that the undertakings given by the Minister are kept. A senior Education Department source has stated categorically to the Liberal Party that replies are being prepared and given to the Minister's office. Whilst I cannot include a question in the opening statement, I would hope that the Minister will give an undertaking to provide the answer to that question from last year. I also hope that this year we can follow the normal procedures that apply to Estimates Committees.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I am quite happy to give that undertaking, and I note that there has been correspondence throughout the year on progress being made on this matter, indeed in an attempt to clarify the amount of detail sought. It has already cost an enormous amount of money to seek and to provide that information from an organisation as large as the Education Department. Already, as the Auditor-General's Report shows, a great deal of work has been done in the Education Department to determine the nature and extent of committees and ongoing review processes for them. But, they do provide a very valuable component of the work of a human services organisation such as education services. That information will be provided. Indeed, the honourable member may like to clarify to what extent detail is required, given that almost every school would have a labyrinth of committee structures, and our relationships with other human service agencies as well go right through the tiers of the education structure in the State. That work is ongoing and a reply will be provided to the honourable member who sought the information.

Mr S.J. BAKER: The Minister is well aware that the question related to some 38 committees that were identified as being part of the central office network, and we are interested in those overseeing committees rather than in mothers clubs or school sports committees. We had actually kept the question to within quite meaningful bounds, but we are still awaiting a reply.

I refer to page 162 of the Program Estimates. The Minister would be aware that the Government has decided to close the Payneham Primary School and that that decision has met with strong opposition from parents and staff, especially as there has been virtually no consultation and the decision was contrary to assurances that were given by Government and departmental representatives over the past six years. These assurances were that Government policy meant that only if the enrolment of the school dropped below 100 students for a number of consecutive years would closure even be considered. So this situation does not apply to Payneham Primary School, as enrolments remain just above 100 students. The local member (Mr Groom) claimed that he only made such a statement six years ago to the school when there was a different Minister.

An honourable member: In *Hansard*.

Mr S.J. BAKER: That is correct. However, the evidence shows that Mr Groom's statement is not correct. In fact, he has been giving similar assurances for the past six years. We have been given a copy of some school council minutes from late 1986, when the Hon. Greg Crafter was Minister, which clearly indicate Mr Groom making such an assurance. The principal of the school, Mr Frank, has again confirmed to the Opposition this week that Mr Groom has made similar statements to the school this year. In the light of these assurances given to the school over the past six years, will the Minister explain the reasons for breaking those assurances; namely, that action would not be considered unless the school consistently dropped below 100? Further, did Mr Groom discuss the nature of this assurance with the Minister before he gave it to the school?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: First, I understand that Mr Groom wrote to the school outlining the statement that I had made in the House wherein I stated that there was no rule with respect to a certain number of students being required for a school to remain open or it would be closed. I am not sure whether the member for Hartley read that letter into *Hansard* when he spoke on the matter recently in the House. I think he might have done, or at least referred to it. It is clearly on record. It is presumably in the school records that that criterion was not a criterion that was used by the department. That certainly is not the case. We have no published or established criteria. Each school is taken on its merits. In that case there have been discussions over a long period about the ongoing viability of that school.

It is disturbing to know that there is an indication that next year the school will receive only six new enrolments and that the numbers of students in several class levels will be very small indeed. Whilst the school may survive for the next couple of years, a responsible decision had to be made with respect to where that school was going in the longer term. Clearly, that decision was to close the school.

No school closure is easy to embrace. I think that every time there has been an announcement of this type, groups of parents or groups within the school community have opposed it and sought to advance reasons—some of substance; others without substance—to continue the school in that location. That is entirely understandable. People make great commitments to their schools, and the stability of their children's education is an important factor. However, we are vested with responsibilities which are not easy to administer, but we must do so and I believe we do so responsibly, despite that criticism which may occur in a school community or in the broader community. Obviously this is one case.

I can assure the honourable member that the Education Department will work with that school community very carefully to ensure that the best interests of each of the children attending that school are taken into account in the decisions which are taken in the ongoing discussions that have been proposed by the department with that particular school.

Mr S.J. BAKER: As a supplementary question, I would like clarification of the basis for Mr Groom giving these assurances. The Minister has said that Mr Groom had no basis for giving assurances to the Payneham Primary School.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: From my understanding of Mr Groom's statement in this place, he has not given those assurances.

Mr S.J. BAKER: Except that they are on the school record. My next question relates to statements made about the closure of the Payneham Primary School. At a protest meeting over the closure of the Payneham Primary School, the Director of the Adelaide area, Mr Cusack, represented

the department. The parents who attended that meeting have advised Liberal members that Mr Cusack informed the meeting that schools with fewer than 160 students could not be considered viable. That statement alarmed many parents, as there are many primary schools which are under that 160 range. I should like to table a list, if it is acceptable, of schools which have come to our attention and which are below the 160 level to which Mr Cusack referred.

On page 9 of the statistical table I notice that in 1990 there were 187 schools with fewer than 100 students, and there 162 schools in the 101 to 200 student range. I note particularly that there were 111 primary schools with fewer than 100 students, and, of course, there were also some very important rural schools. If the formula that Mr Cusack talks about is applied, about 200 schools would seemingly be at risk. Is it acceptable for this list, which we have drawn, to be incorporated into *Hansard*?

The CHAIRMAN: It is much easier if the member simply refers to the statistical summary tabled by the Minister which does seem to provide similar information and which is already on record. Is that convenient, or do you actually want to table that list?

Mr S.J. BAKER: I would actually like my list inserted, because it is a brief analysis of the figures and it contains some important matters. Whilst it is only a selection of the total schools at risk, it is quite a representative sample.

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps we can take up that matter with the honourable member when he has completed his question; he can approach the Chair later.

Mr S.J. BAKER: Certainly. Alternatively, I would be more than grateful if the Minister could table the list of all schools with fewer than 160 students. Does the Minister support the statement by Mr Cusack, who is a senior executive of the department, and does it reflect part of the Government's policy in relation to school closures?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Very clearly the honourable member has misquoted Mr Cusack—and misquoted him very badly. If he is attempting to imply that any school with fewer than 160 students is to be closed, I want to dispel that allegation here and now. The statements that I have consistently made on this matter are on the record. Each school is considered on its merits, and a variety of factors will determine whether or not a school should remain open. One of those factors is student numbers, but that is only one factor.

I was not at the meeting, and I do not have any indication of the context in which Mr Cusack was alleged to have made that statement. However, my guess is that he was referring to a school with seven classes of approximately 25 students, so about that number is what would be regarded as an optimum primary school. However, as the member for Mitcham has said, a huge number of schools have less than that number. Putting them in *Hansard* really is meaningless because almost all those schools are viable and effective and will remain so.

Each school is referred to in the information that has been made available to all members today, so their enrolments and other statistical details are available for the honourable members.

The reality is that there is no number. The honourable member wants to imply that an officer of the department has made a comment leading to that, but it is simply not so. We do know that there is an optimum size for a primary school in terms of class sizes, the range of services that can be provided to a school community, and the like. All those criteria need to be taken into account. As I said, in a primary school with seven classes, one would look at a class size of 25, and that is the optimum size. We do not run a system

that adheres to those criteria. We never have, and I do not think it is possible, practical or even desirable that that should be so.

Mr S.J. BAKER: I note that there is a summary of schools in alphabetical order in the additional information kindly provided to the Committee by the Minister. On notice, will the Minister provide a regional analysis of the schools by size under 160 students? Will he highlight those that are being considered for closure?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I am prepared to go through the list. It comprises Airdale Junior Primary School, 113 students; Banksia Park Junior Primary School, 127 students—

Mr S.J. BAKER: We have the list. What I am asking the Minister, on notice, is to put them into regional order and provide the Committee with some indication as to whether they fulfil the criteria for closure.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: That can be found in the additional information that is before the Committee. I am not sure whether I can add any more to that with respect to the schools that are under review. I will obtain some information across the State, but there will be very few.

Mr S.J. BAKER: I refer to page 164 of the Program Estimates. Last year, during the Estimates Committee, the Minister and Ms Kolbe revealed that there were 21 surplus-to-requirement officers in the department in that category. These officers were originally identified as surplus during the 1986-87 budget strategy and were still awaiting redeployment at that stage. How many of these 21 officers are still retained within the department? Will the Minister provide a breakdown to show what has happened to each of the 67 officers or positions identified in 1986-87 as being surplus and part of the original back-to-school strategy?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: First, let me clarify a misconception which the Opposition has about this matter and which it keeps repeating. Those 67 positions were abolished and that the occupants of those positions were required to take a number of career options. Some retired from the Education Department, some left the department, some occupied, applied for and won other positions in the department, and others were placed in existing positions within the department. Those positions were abolished and, in a sense, the savings that accrued were deducted from the Education Department's budget. It is not a matter of having surplus people in the Education Department. Those positions were abolished and the previous occupants of them now occupy other meaningful positions in the department. Whether the positions were vacant is a matter of the circumstances at the time. I will be pleased to provide the statistical information that the honourable member seeks about the pathways that were followed by that group of officers.

Mr HAMILTON: I preface my question by referring to the declining enrolments in the western suburbs. As the Minister well knows, I was disappointed with the decision to close the West Lakes High School and its eventual closure. While I suppose that as the member for Albert Park I have a clear responsibility to fight for and retain the best facilities and benefits for my constituents, I believe that in many respects I am, to use the old cliché, between a rock and a hard place because, as the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, I can also appreciate the need for efficiency and effectiveness within Government agencies.

As the Director-General will be aware, I have expressed my interest and views publicly to the effect that I was not convinced that closure of the school was necessary, but nevertheless I can appreciate the reasons why the decision was taken. I want to place that on record because I believe that it is the responsibility of any member of Parliament to fight as hard as he or she possibly can to retain facilities

within their respective electorates. My question relates to pages 166—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr HAMILTON: It was not a cop out at all.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Can we get to the question?

Mr HAMILTON: Yes, Sir, I was just coming to that before the interjection. I refer to pages 166 and 167 of the Budget Estimates.

In the commentary on the variations between last year's and this year's expenditure in relation to both primary and secondary education (pages 166 and 167) reference is made to increasing enrolments in primary schools and decreasing enrolments in secondary schools. Will the Minister elaborate on the enrolment trends in our schools?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: With regard to the honourable member's preliminary comments, I am aware of the difficulties facing any local member when a decision is taken to close a school in an electorate, particularly a high school which has provided very valuable service in a growing community such as the honourable member's electorate and then to see that school decline in numbers. That is a very difficult process indeed. It is a great assistance to the Education Department that it has the approval to expend in education the resources that are obtained from the disposal of surplus properties. The closure of the West Lakes High School is taken in the context of the provision of secondary education in a number of schools in the western suburbs. In that way, we can achieve a planned provision of education across those suburbs in a way that has not been clearly articulated previously and we can take into account the changing needs of those communities.

I would hope that the opportunities arising with respect to the submarine project in Port Adelaide, the renewed tourist and service industries evolving around Port Adelaide, and the increase in population on LeFevre Peninsula and the possibility now of the multifunction polis being established in that locality can all be taken into account in the work that will go on in the next few years to restructure secondary education in the western suburbs.

Enrolment patterns in our schools are important. I can advise the Committee that primary enrolments have been increasing since 1989 after declining for the previous decade. They reached a minimum of 108 752 in February 1988, but are expected to continue to increase to a level of approximately 125 000 for a February figure in the mid-1990s. It should be noted that due to the continuous admission policy, primary enrolments increased during the course of the year. For example, in 1989 the increase was 7.1 per cent between the February and July census giving a total of 117 756 primary enrolments in July.

However, secondary enrolments are a different story. Secondary enrolments, which for the past decade have been between 70 000 and 80 000, dropped to 66 700 students in February 1990. That figure is expected to continue to decline to a minimum of approximately 62 500 students in February 1994, and then to increase reflecting the current increase in primary enrolments. Unlike the increases that occur in primary enrolments during the school year, secondary enrolments decrease. In 1989 the decrease between the census in February and July was 3.9 per cent giving a total of 69 316 secondary enrolments in July.

Two other factors should be considered: first, that the retention rate of students in senior secondary years has been increasing annually in this State to the stage where our figures compare favourably with other States of Australia; and, secondly, there is a strong movement of adults back into formal senior secondary education. Hopefully, both of

those factors will be a fillip to the declining secondary enrolments in this State.

Mr HAMILTON: Following on the Minister's comment about the disposal of surplus properties, this morning I received a letter from Mr Feder, the Chairman of the Seaton High School Council. He states:

Recently, announcements have been made regarding the review into secondary education in the western suburbs and, as a result of this review, it has been announced that West Lakes High School is to close. This closure will have ramifications in regard to numbers of students transferring to Seaton and the resultant pressures on the facilities currently available at Seaton. The Seaton High School Council would appreciate assurances that, as West Lakes closes, Seaton will be able to obtain resources no longer required to upgrade those currently available at Seaton.

In the document produced to announce the review findings, it was quoted that several of the surrounding schools will have major upgradings. No such plan was indicated for Seaton. The council anticipates that, if Seaton is to have many of the West Lakes students, there should also be major upgrading of facilities to accommodate the expected increase in numbers from West Lakes and give much needed improvement of facilities for existing students at Seaton.

The letter goes on to say that the council would appreciate a copy of the facilities review of secondary schools, which was conducted in 1989. I will not read the whole letter into *Hansard*; suffice to say that the two paragraphs which are the nub of this letter state:

It is our belief that, as a result of this review and the closure of West Lakes High School, Seaton should be able to obtain resources to upgrade current facilities. We also believe that Seaton could develop specialist areas (technical studies, languages, international baccalaureate, computing, business studies, to name just some possibilities) just as other schools have been encouraged to do.

We would appreciate an assurance that a prompt and major upgrading of Seaton will result from this review of secondary education in the western suburbs. Your earliest attention in this regard would be appreciated.

I have a great deal of sympathy for the request made by the Seaton High School. If the school is to accommodate many of those students, additional facilities and resources should be made available to it. Whilst not expecting that all the funding from the sale of the West Lakes High School should be given to the Seaton High School, I believe that a considerable amount of moneys raised from the disposal of that school should be considered in relation to the number of students that attend the Seaton High School. The Seaton High School's major catchment area is in the electorate of Albert Park and I seek the Minister's undertaking that he will give favourable consideration to the request contained in this correspondence.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I appreciate the honourable member's comments. It is very encouraging to hear of the commitment that is being shown to the Seaton High School, the desire to further expand the curriculum that is offered in that school and for the physical resources of the school to be upgraded. I know that some improvements have been made at that school in recent years and it has a very active school community.

Following the closure of a school, the physical and cash resources are divided equitably so that they follow and support the students in the school to which they are transferred. A more general analysis is then made of needs across the education system when the resources obtained from the sale of freed-up property are allocated. Obviously, the department will look at upgrading the facilities in a number of schools in the western suburbs in order to provide the educational opportunities outlined in the western suburbs review. That decision will not be taken for some time because the schools will not become available for some time. Obviously, all of those schools will need to be involved in the process of discussion and determination of priorities

so that the proper decisions may be taken with respect to the allocation of the proceeds.

Mr HAMILTON: I refer to the Education Department's computing strategy plan mentioned on page 183 of the Program Estimates. Last year, grants were made to schools for administrative computer equipment. Will the Minister explain this scheme, and how is the Education Department helping to provide computers for use by students in the classroom?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Some quite substantial improvements have been made in recent years with respect to school administration, and I regard as very important the fact that schools have proper resources or access to the proper technology to administer the school efficiently and effectively. The whole of the work of the Education Department is focused on schools—schools are where it all happens, and anyone who is not in a school in fact serves a school in the education system.

So, there has been very substantial provision of administrative computers, and some very interesting ongoing work is being done to design software appropriate for school use in this State and other ancillary equipment, for example, fax machines have been provided to schools. All of this equipment, as well as supporting the administration of schools, dovetails into the ability of the school to access greater curriculum and learning opportunities for students. Fax machines have now become an important communication resource in schools, and the use of computers, as a learning tool, is a very exciting component to access information. They are being used in schools in a variety of ways right across the system. I will ask Ms Kolbe to explain the work that is going on in terms of computers and school administration.

Ms Kolbe: The administrative computing initiative actually followed a strategic information plan which was developed by a consultant on behalf of the department and it had several major recommendations, one of which was to provide comprehensive administrative computing within schools so that we could gain the efficiencies that emanate from computing these days.

Secondly, through computers and other technologies we would be able to establish a communications network which was important for efficient administration as well as curriculum use. The other two recommendations of importance were that human resources management systems should be developed so that we could again have schools access information that was important for them to make good decisions locally, ensuring that the local manager, namely the principal, was able to manage the school successfully and have the appropriate management information that was required.

Another recommendation that is perhaps not of great importance in this context is that, for reasons of efficiency again and to maintain the ability to fund what we are actually doing, we would continue to use the State Computing Centre for at least three to five years. In the meantime, in relation to the implementation of this information plan we have provided funding to schools for hardware and implementation of the hardware and training. Selection of hardware has taken place through tender and schools are in the process of purchasing from the preferred suppliers the hardware that is necessary to create this computing environment which the plan proposes. At the moment we are in the process of finalising the software specifications so that a tender can be let for software. In relation to the human resources management service, we have put out a request for information in the market. We have tested the market and on the basis of information from a technological point that was provided, we are now also creating a speci-

fication which should be ready to go out to tender later this year subject to the appropriate approvals being obtained in the meantime.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I ask Dr Boston to comment on the curriculum use of computers.

Dr Boston: Not only are computers critical to the administration of the system and to allowing schools to exercise devolved powers while at the same time reporting their expenditure for central purposes, they are also fundamental in the curriculum of the schools. There is a large investment in computers in the classrooms in South Australia and the Minister of Education today has allocated a further \$320 000 to schools for the 1990-91 financial year.

Schools are leading the way in using computers as tools for learning in all our schools and in doing so they are taking a big step forward to equip students for life and work in the twenty-first century. The computer loan purchase scheme has generated more than \$2.5 million towards financing computer purchases for schools since it began in 1985. The key to its success has been the tremendous commitment of school communities in working with the State Government to maximise resources for purchasing computers for schools.

The scheme enables schools to gain cash grants or loans to help purchase computers and today the Minister has announced details of the latest computer purchase grants which, I understand, are to be released from his office this afternoon.

Mr BRINDAL: I refer to the Program Estimates (page 161) and the Auditor-General's Report (page 118). What were the vacancy rental costs for the Education Department in the year 1989-90 and how much of these costs relate to employee housing and how much to vacant office accommodation?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The figures that I have relate to teacher housing. I do not have the figures before me but I do not believe that, to any great extent, the Education Department has any vacant office accommodation. I will undertake to find out whether there is any vacant office accommodation. In fact, in recent years we have transferred units out of expensive central city leased accommodation into vacant school premises and many specialist units are now accommodated satisfactorily in that way. That has brought about an overall efficiency in Government office and accommodation expenditure.

The Education Department is required to pay a vacancy rental on Government employee teacher housing which is held on behalf of the department and which is temporarily vacant, and the rate of payment is determined by the Office of Government Employee Housing. Funds for vacancy rentals are held in the round sum allowances by Treasury and allocated to the department towards the end of the financial year. In 1989-90, in constant dollar terms, the level of expenditure is below that experienced during the period 1982-83 to 1985-86 but has increased slightly, about 4 per cent per annum, since 1986-87. The length of time for which houses are vacant is minimised and properties no longer required are disposed of. The alternatives to retaining temporary vacant housing, such as buying and selling houses or the use of hotels and motels as required, would be both impractical and more costly so it is inevitable that there be vacant rental accommodation, particularly over the long vacation period each year. The teacher housing stock is valued in excess of \$100 million, and the expenditure for the 1989-90 period was \$456 438; in 1988-89 the figure was \$442 378.

Mr BRINDAL: I am somewhat surprised that the Minister considers Mobilong House, Noarlunga House or the

headquarters of the northern region to be disused school premises. I am also surprised because the Auditor-General (page 118) quotes a figure of \$453 000. The Minister gave a different figure. Which is the correct figure?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: There seems to be a discrepancy of \$3 000 on the figures that I have before me. It may be a different year that we are talking about, because that is about the difference between the years, or there may be some other reason. I will have to take advice and work out the basis of those respective figures, but I think I can say that it is around that sum that we are paying in vacancy rental expenditure.

Mr BRINDAL: The Auditor-General's Report (page 118) under the heading 'Employee subsidies' refers to \$4.5 million being paid by the Education Department. Can the Minister provide a breakdown of that figure?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will obtain that information for the honourable member.

Mr BRINDAL: My second question relates to assessment procedures and I refer to the Program Estimates (page 162). The Associate Director-General (Mr Garth Boomer) has long been regarded as an expert in curriculum and, some four years ago when he was head of the Commonwealth Schools Commission, he wrote a major article entitled 'Ticks, Praise and Good Work Stamps'. Mr Boomer argued in the article that ticking creates anxiety, leads to false hope and is a practice that should be changed. He argued that public prizes can cause fear and despair by rewarding academic achievement and not other forms of achievement. He stated that ticking was a member of a wider family of praise which included good work stamps, early minutes and glowing remarks in reports. He said:

Every tick implies a cross and every cross underlines painfully the absence of a tick. It is therefore destined to create anxiety.

He even went on to describe ticking as rat psychology, where rats used in experiments were rewarded with food for pressing the right button. Mr Boomer is currently the Associate Director-General and the highest member in the Minister's department on areas of curriculum short of the Director-General. I am therefore forced to ask: does the Minister share the views of Mr Boomer in this area, and is this the sort of educational philosophy that is currently being practised by the South Australian Education Department?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: One must always be careful of people who selectively quote from speeches in such complex areas of education philosophy. One, I think, can see the wisdom of Mr Boomer's words when one analyses the approach taken in New South Wales to standardised testing, to a ticks and crosses mentality—a simplified approach to assessing what is actually occurring in our schools. Similar approaches that have been taken in England and in North America I think are now being shown to be shallow and have been discredited and to be manipulated by education systems. They have really been quite destructive of education generally.

So, I would think that there is a lot of wisdom in Mr Boomer's words. He has had the opportunity, since that time, to come into a State education system and has been the architect of a very important alternative to the simplified approach to which I referred in some other jurisdictions. The writing and reading assessment program (WRAP) that has been established in this State has been lauded by educators internationally and locally. It is likely to be taken up in other Australian States. Most importantly, I think it will provide us with some very valuable information about outcomes in our schools in terms of literacy, and, as a model, it can be used in other fields, for example, numeracy. However, Mr Boomer is quite capable of defending his own

stance, I would have thought, and I will give him this opportunity to do so.

Mr Boomer: First, if I could correct the honourable member, while he might have found that speech from the Commonwealth Schools Commission days, I actually gave it, from memory, in 1983, before I took up that post with the Commonwealth Schools Commission. If we had that speech before us I could point out that part of my style, as a speaker, is when presenting a speech to be somewhat dramatic in making a point. That particular passage has been quoted and has been a source of amusement in many places. In fact, when I delivered the speech there was a good deal of humour around the situation. I was making a point that the education system tends to be ingrained with certain behaviour as psychological views of learning which diminish children, and I was saying that even when people tick or cross work they may not realise that they could be contributing to a brand of behaviour as psychology which, as an educator, I do not hold to.

The whole point of that speech in the end came to putting forward a view of learning to the effect that learners are in the process of constructing knowledge, the teacher's role is to extend that construction and feed into it and the educational regime that would come out of this was one which would be rigorous, teaching children to question and to rely on their own brain power. So there was no great turnabout in philosophy when I returned to South Australia. My colleagues and I have instituted a survey of literacy that is both rigorous and demanding in what it seeks to find in the system. In fact, in June this year we issued our first interim report on the writing and reading assessment program. Anyone reading the findings of that report and the rigorous examination of work in the basics—the conventions of spelling, the handling of sentence control and the handling of genre control in writing—will see that there is nothing sappy or romantic about this.

In fact, we are true to the ideals espoused in that speech of many years ago which was basically saying that we need to look much more closely, as the Minister has said, than at only superficial things in seeing how our children are performing. We are able now, as a result of this survey, to talk in great depth about the kinds of assignments teachers are setting and the rigour of those assignments. We are able to talk about the performance of children against those assignments. We can tell the percentage of spelling errors that are occurring in work; and we can tell the amount of time being spent on reproduction of writing as opposed to extended creative writing. This survey will continue for another 18 months and we will have further rigorous data to support curriculum development in this State coming out of that.

Relating back to that particular article, I would say that the comments have been taken out of context. There was an element of humour and irony in what I was talking about then. I think that my educational credentials are reasonably well known in this area. I have been fighting for improved literacy and numeracy throughout my career, and will continue to do so. The work we are instituting in the South Australian Education Department, I think, is an exemplification of the kind of rigour in the basics in education that I would adhere to.

Mr BRINDAL: As a supplementary question, I think the Minister said that Mr Boomer is now in a State system. Is the Minister aware that Mr Boomer was trained and had a very illustrious career in a very good State system before he ever went to the Commonwealth Schools Commission? Secondly, if Mr Boomer was quoted out of context and at the wrong time, I do apologise. But, I would ask that the

matter be clarified, because either Mr Boomer or the *Advertiser* must recycle stories, as this speech was reported by David Kellett on 22 March 1988. Can that be clarified? Thirdly, what does the Minister think a maths teacher should do if confronted with a problem which he has to assess as being correct or incorrect? Does the Minister think it is not logical to put a tick or a cross? What method does the Minister suggest should be used?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I am well aware of Mr Boomer's career; I actually went to primary school with him and our families have been friends throughout that time. I think I was referring to Mr Boomer's returning to a State education system. With respect to the time at which that speech was made, I think Mr Boomer has explained that himself; it was used in a number of speeches. I do not know whether Mr Boomer wants to further clarify that. I do not propose to engage in a long discussion about the philosophy of merit in education. I think everyone would have a different view about that.

Mr Boomer has explained the thinking behind the comments he made. I invite any honourable members to visit some of our schools and see the practices being applied, because I think we have a lot to be grateful for in view of what is being achieved in our schools. We have excellent teachers and programs and support structures for our teachers.

Before we move to the next question, it might be helpful, with respect to the vacancy rental expenditure that the honourable member raised earlier, if I were to place in *Hansard* a chart of expenditure. The figures to which I referred were expenditure in 1989-90 constant dollars. I will have inserted in *Hansard* a chart showing actual expenditure and expenditure in 1989-90 dollars for the period 1982-83 to 1989-90.

Vacancy Rental Expenditure 1982-83 to 1989-90

	Actual Expenditure \$	Expenditure in 1989-90 \$
1982-83	338 200	644 520
1983-84	313 800	558 898
1984-85	403 500	657 511
1985-86	443 500	652 838
1986-87	301 612	407 692
1987-88	366 873	430 848
1988-89	418 127	442 378
1989-90	456 438	456 438

Mr BRINDAL: My last question refers to page 159 of the Program Estimates and it is on employee numbers. Total employment in the Education Department is estimated, according to the figures, to be 17 814 average full-time equivalents for 1990-91. Will the Minister provide for the Committee a breakdown of those employees into Education Act employees, GME Act employees and ancillary staff employees? Last year's education budget leaflet included a claim that 'more than 980 teacher positions had been kept in the school system since 1983'. However, the Minister was reported in the *News* of 30 August 1990 as having claimed that 870 extra teachers had been kept in schools over the past seven years. Is the Minister now claiming that 110 fewer teachers have been kept in schools over that period than he claimed were kept in schools last year?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I think we need to refer apples to apples rather than apples to oranges in terms of the period about which the honourable member is talking with regard to employment, because that can be misleading, and different agencies use different figures. I can have these figures inserted in *Hansard*, which might help. In the 1990-91

budget, the proposal is for 14 233.8 teachers, 2 723.2 ancillary staff and 867 GME Act employees. These are all FTEs.

Mr HERON: In the achievements section of both primary and secondary education, referred to on pages 166 and 167, there are comments about the curriculum guarantee and class sizes. What are class sizes like in our schools, and how do they compare with those in other States?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: We are waiting for an outcome from the analysis of the Victorian budget, but we can almost be assured that South Australia has the best statistics with respect to class sizes in this country, and this budget confirms that. As I said in my introductory remarks, other State budgets are moving away from the position to which they previously held with respect to class sizes. It is interesting that in technical schools in Victoria there has been an increase of 30 per cent in class sizes. The figures available to me for 1988 and 1989 for other States and Territories regarding student/teacher ratios are quite illuminating. New South Wales has moved from 16 to 16.4; Victoria from 13.3 to 13, and I am estimating that that will blow out again. In Queensland the figure is 16.1 to 16; in South Australia, 13.6 to 13.9; in Western Australia, 16.7 to 16; and in Tasmania, 13.8 to 13.7. Again, that figure will change in this current budget cycle. The figures for the Northern Territory are 13.3 to 13 and for the ACT 14.4 to 14.5. The Australian average in 1988 was 15 and for 1989 it was 14.9. There will be changes for the 1990 figures. It is clear that South Australia will be in an advantaged position to other States and Territories with regard to student/teacher ratios.

Mr HERON: My next two questions refer to teachers' salaries. I cannot quote a page number because this subject goes right through the program. How much will teachers' benchmark salaries cost, and what is the Commonwealth's proposed share of that cost?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The issue of national benchmark salaries for teachers arose out of the latest accord determined between the Australian Council of Trade Unions and the Federal Government. In that accord the agreement was that teachers and nurses would be exempted from the current national wage structure in order that they could achieve national benchmark salaries. In consequence, State Ministers met the Commonwealth Minister and it was agreed, over a series of meetings, that we would move to a national benchmark salary of \$37 200 for what is generally known as the top of the automatic scale for classroom teachers. The figure of \$37 200 was sought by the Australian Council of Trade Unions and the Australian Teachers' Union in their discussions with the Commonwealth Government. However, I must admit that that was altered when the National Party Government in Queensland offered a substantial amount in addition to that prior to the last Queensland State election. It is interesting to note that Queensland teachers have not yet received the \$37 200, let alone the \$38 600, and the Queensland Industrial Commission has for almost 12 months now refused to ratify that arrangement.

The Premiers raised this matter at the Premiers' Conference with the Prime Minister, because the financial implications for the States and Territories are significant and, indeed, are approaching almost \$1 000 million in teachers' salaries. In discussions that Ministers have held with the various State teacher unions, the ACTU and the Australian Teachers' Union, we have wanted to negotiate a series of reforms for the teaching profession and the quality of education in this country. That has now been embodied in a national project which is currently getting under way and which will look at a number of important facets of teaching and of education and how they can be part of the award

restructuring concept that embraces the Australian work force at the present time. I appreciate the commitment with which the unions have taken part in those discussions.

The Commonwealth, I think regrettably, at the Premiers Conference, in answer to the request by the State Premiers for additional assistance in this area, gave no additional financial support other than what would be expected of it; that is, it would supplement to the national benchmark that share of the salaries for which it was already responsible. In South Australia's case, of the \$36 million required to take teachers' salaries to the \$37 200 benchmark, the Commonwealth's commitment there is approximately \$2 million, so it is a small amount indeed.

This is an ongoing matter of discussion between State Ministers and the Federal Minister and, indeed, I anticipate that it will continue through to next year's Premiers Conference. So, the State is being left with a substantial payment in consequence of an agreement entered into by the Federal Government with the Australian Council of Trade Unions. I think no-one denies that there is a need to increase teachers' salaries, and that the commitment that this Government has made—along with other State Governments—does provide a substantial fillip to teachers' salaries. For the first time it does establish a structure for ongoing discussions about not only salaries but also the quality of education generally. So, if about \$1 000 million of taxpayers' money is going to be spent in additional salaries, it needs to be done so in a way that will bring about substantial improvements in the quality of education.

Mr HERON: You said that the national benchmark itself was agreed. Where are the negotiations at this moment in relation to those benchmark salaries on a national basis?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: At the conference of Ministers in Melbourne on 1 June, they agreed that the concept of a national benchmark should be established. The figure that was agreed was \$37 200, which was for teachers who were trained for four years and who were at the top of the incremental scale. It was agreed that progress towards that benchmark would be negotiated in accordance with the structural efficiency principles as part of the package including productivity improvements, career structures and qualitative improvements in educational outcomes, and that discussion should continue with the objective of further development of a coordinated approach to a future salary and conditions agreement.

The discrepancies between the States and the leap-frogging that has gone on has been one of the factors that have bedevilled teachers' salaries in this country. We were faced with a situation where there is now a very clear commitment on the part of the unions to establish a national award and a national union structure, yet disparate State structures are still negotiating individually. This has brought about a change to that situation, and it is one which we in South Australia welcomed. Obviously, it cannot be achieved overnight. I think it was a momentous decision that all States agreed to a figure of \$37 200. It was agreed that a higher benchmark could be achieved and that that process was dependent upon recognition that any such increase must be paid for in each State or Territory within existing resources, including Commonwealth supplementation. As I said, that was a matter that was debated at the Premiers Conference, as were the outcomes for State and Territory funding, the Commonwealth decisions on supplementation and further discussion and agreement between unions and employees.

In that resolution, we noted the situation that had arisen in Queensland. As I understand it, the decision taken more recently in New South Wales to move to a figure of \$38 000 was taken *inter alia* on the basis that that State had, in fact,

reduced its teaching service dramatically, and that factor was taken into account in reaching the \$38 000 figure and also, obviously, other conditions of employment in that State.

However, the reality is that in Victoria the figure of \$37 200 has been accepted, and it is being paid to teachers progressively until that figure is reached on 1 July next year. A figure of less than that—of \$37 020—has been agreed in Western Australia. The Tasmanian Government is still negotiating with the union. The Northern Territory Government has accepted a figure in conjunction with the unions of less than that, but I understand it is working towards a figure of \$37 200. I think \$37 200 is almost being paid in the ACT, and it is the figure that has been offered in South Australia but rejected.

Mr SUCH: Regarding the Program Estimates (pages 166, 167 and 176), what steps is the department taking to ensure that people who are training as teachers and who are coming to the Education Department are of the highest possible standard: that they have high levels of academic attainment, a sense of commitment to education, to children, and teaching as a profession; and that the courses they undertake at the training institutions are relevant and appropriate?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: To a large extent they are matters outside my ministerial control, but we are certainly interested in those issues. We are concerned first, that the students who are embarking on teachers courses are not, in the main, those who have attained matriculation examination marks at the higher end of the scale. Interestingly, a larger group of adults are returning to study, and many of those are returning to the field of education—and that is welcomed. Secondly, we are recruiting very few new teachers because of our enrolment patterns, nor will we be able to do so for many years yet.

That matter also raises some important planning issues with respect to tertiary education provision in this area. As the tertiary institutions currently involved in the restructuring process are the major providers of teacher education in this State, obviously we are very concerned that the new institution to be established does take account of those concerns and is aware of the future needs of this department.

I think it is true to say that many young people who have gone through teacher education courses are now having to seek employment outside South Australia or in the non-government education sector. So, the courses provided here also have that national dimension to them. I believe there is also a need to integrate more closely teacher education across State boundaries than there has been in the past. One cannot consider this topic without looking at the needs for the in-service provision of our teachers. The Education Department is doing a great deal of work in this area in conjunction with the tertiary institutions. So, there are many facets to this question. They are important issues that are of concern to us, although, as I said when I prefaced my remarks, they are not matters that are directly within my ministerial control.

Dr Boston: The Education Department, or the Minister, is represented on the governing bodies of the tertiary education institutions and we have an input into the broad direction and oversight of their teacher training programs. We are also involved in course design as consultants and as members of course committees of the various institutions, so we also have an input at that point. Similarly, in our own consultative structure, we are in close contact with tertiary education through the State In-service Education Committee, for example, which is chaired by Denise Brad-

ley, the Director of the South Australian College of Advanced Education.

As the Minister said, he does not have direct control over this area, but we try to relate very closely to it by a process of professional osmosis at a range of levels through this structure. There is no doubt that the training and development of the teachers we already have is a more important priority for the future than the intake of large numbers of new teachers, although we will still be taking freshly trained teachers in some specific areas in which we require new skills.

Consistent with the award restructuring process and consistent with the changing needs in the curriculum area, we will constantly require professional renewal and refreshment for our teachers. We are seeking to do some of that on our own with consultancies and with expertise brought in through the Orphanage Foundation, for example. We will also do so directly through the tertiary education institutions for which we provide scholarships, time release and other programs. We are very strategic on the issue of training and development for teachers already with us and it is very important that we talk closely to the tertiary education institutions so they respond to our needs. It is important that the needs of the department and the product being developed by tertiary education are congruent.

Mr SUCH: Is the Minister confident that the department will have sufficient input into the training of teachers, given that the South Australian College of Advanced Education Act 1982 will become obsolete? Under section 14, the Minister has some legal input into matters affecting the training of teachers.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I am. It is something that both the Minister of Employment and Further Education and I discuss from time to time. We have regular meetings to discuss issues of common concern to our portfolios. The Director-General of Education is a member of the council of the South Australian college and I envisage that, in the new governance of the University of South Australia, there will be representation by the Education Department. In that way, there will be a formal link in the governance and policy making bodies of that institution. As the Director-General said, we are involved in a variety of ways, and that influence is appreciated and effective. We will monitor it very carefully.

Mr SUCH: I refer to the Program Estimates (page 162) and the Auditor-General's Report (page 134) concerning workers compensation. What has been the cause of the 33.5 per cent increase in the number of stress claims, the 18 per cent increase in the number of over-exertion claims and the 26 per cent increase in claims for falls? Does this mean that there will be a large increase in premiums and payments in the next few years? What workers compensation premium was paid in 1989-90 and will be paid in 1990-91?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The department does not have that specific information and I do not think that anyone has the capacity to determine why there is an increase in repetitive strain injuries, stress-related injuries, vehicular accident injuries to or from work, or the like. As an employer, we try to the best of our ability to determine why these trends occur and to put them into some sort of context. That work is being undertaken in the department in consultation with other organisations that can assist, varying from the WorkCover organisation, the Public Actuary, officers in the Department of Labour and Crown Law. We analyse those trends very carefully and determine what is the most appropriate response in the circumstances, not simply for the Education Department but right across the work force in this State.

One simply does not change the law or other settled practices for one sector of the work force without having implications for another sector. We are in consultation with these groups and it will be interesting if the WorkCover select committee refers to some of the issues raised by the honourable member and brings to bear some of the expertise that now exists and is building up in the WorkCover organisation to tackle some of these issues, particularly rehabilitation issues, which is a particular difficulty in the context of schools and teachers. That can have very substantial and ongoing cost implications.

Another way of dealing with the matter relates to law reform, and that is a matter of constant review. It is the responsibility of the Minister of Labour. Our discussions with his officers are maintaining a careful monitoring of the need for legislative reform in this area. Of particular concern to us are recent judicial pronouncements in this area in determining what are the circumstances whereby stress is compensable and what is work-related stress and what is not. There is also the issue of how we deal with these matters within our own administration, what administrative structures we require and the policies that we should apply with respect to the most prudent administration of the law in this area and the way in which we care for our employees and provide support for them when they are ill or when their ability to perform the duties for which they are employed is affected. All those matters are being tackled in the department. With respect to the precise figures sought by the honourable member, I ask Ms Kolbe to explain the current cost and the anticipated cost to the department of workers compensation.

Ms Kolbe: In 1989-90, the premium was \$7.1 million. The final figure for 1990-91 is still under determination, but the estimate is \$8.5 million.

Mr SUCH: Given the figures I referred to earlier, will the Minister accept that there is a serious morale problem in the department, and that it appears that many people working as teachers are unsuited for that profession?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: There is no doubt that a section of our teaching service is finding the going very hard. I am not quite sure how many teachers are in that category and what steps are required to redress the difficulties which they are experiencing. It is true that some teachers have found it difficult to adjust to modern teaching practices and modern circumstances of education in our community and the changes which have obviously occurred in teaching and in the composition of our schools and the nature of the provision of education in the community.

Unfortunately, some teachers have not maintained their professional skills and I guess some have been lukewarm in their commitment to that profession, but have stayed in teaching because that was the best option available to them over the years. The department is working with our schools to provide a series of options for that group of teachers in our schools. They vary from access to professional development programs to individual counselling to counselling to leave the teaching service or to transfer to some other public sector employment.

There is a very low turnover in the staff of the Education Department so the opportunity now to leave the teaching profession and come back at some later stage, which was often one way of overcoming some of those problems in the past, is now very limited. With very tight employment opportunities, many teachers do not have the opportunity to go off into other fields of employment so that requires a changed response from us as responsible managers. The overwhelming majority of teachers are competent, are committed to the teaching profession, are involved in maintain-

ing their professional skills and are an asset to our system. However, the small number who are not is an ongoing matter of concern for us all.

Mr SUCH: As a supplementary to that, can the Minister put a percentage on the number of teachers who are unsuitable?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: That question is like the one asked earlier by the member for Mitcham who asked me to say how many students had to be in a school before you closed it. I do not think that figure is actually known.

Mr SUCH: Is it 2 per cent, 5 per cent or 10 per cent?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The criteria on which that is based is also not determined. It may well vary from time to time as well, but it is certainly of a size that concerns us. I guess that it is not simply the Education Department which has that dilemma within its staff, but many other Government agencies also.

Mr De LAINE: I refer to the total expenditure amount on page 159 of the Program Estimates. How much is the Education Department's share of the total State budget and how does it compare with previous years?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I thank the honourable member for that question because there are people who continually mislead the community with respect to the education provision. In South Australia in recent years, the actual State budget cake has grown because we have included in that cake a number of agencies which have not previously been included in the State budget documents and the budget process. That has caused some to interpret that a diminished percentage or slice of that cake is being provided for education. In fact, the figures show that expenditure on education in this State has increased each year since 1982. However, as I have said, we fit into a much larger cake.

The Education Department's share of the State budget for recurrent and capital purposes for 1990-91 has increased compared with expenditure in 1989-90. Recurrent funding has increased by 0.9 per cent and capital funding by 0.7 per cent. Comparisons over a long period are difficult to determine since the changes to public finance arrangements and accounting practices has resulted in significant increases in State outlays and I refer to the appropriating Commonwealth funding through Consolidated Account for the first time in 1987-88 and the introduction of depreciation on interest charges changes on assets owned by Government agencies.

However, after making allowance for all those factors, the recurrent expenditure by the Education Department as a share of the State budget has remained relatively stable between 1986-87 and 1990-91. As I said earlier in the Committee's deliberations, per capita expenditure per student has increased in real terms despite an enrolment decrease of 26 000 students between 1982 and 1990.

Mr De LAINE: I refer to personnel services on page 176 of the Program Estimates and in particular, to the implementation of the curriculum guarantee. What is the situation with regard to contract teachers? I recall that the curriculum guarantee promised to reduce the number of contract teachers. Has any progress been made in that area?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Yes, there has certainly been very substantial progress in that area. Some concern was expressed particularly in some rural centres about the number of contract teachers. Contract teachers are employed to replace teachers who are on leave of one form or another—study leave, long service leave and accouchement leave and the like. The department changed some of the rules with respect to the way in which teachers took that leave. It was found to be disrupting school communities and a number of teach-

ers were taking leave at the same time, particularly in smaller schools, and that affected learning programs.

A number of decisions were taken. They were negotiated with the unions and as a result of that we were able to significantly reduce the contract teaching requirement in schools. I will ask the Director-General to comment on that because it has been a very successful process which has been used by the department.

Dr Boston: The abolition of the equitable service scheme eliminated what we believe to be a factor in the system which caused low morale for teachers and which was certainly in management terms not a terribly useful practice. We were anxious that we would not be able to staff country schools as well with that scheme gone. However, we found that we began this year with not one position unfilled in country schools with that scheme gone. At the same time, we were able to reduce very substantially the number of contract teachers in country areas because we were able to eliminate entirely contracts under the equitable service scheme to replace people who were not taking up their country service and thus had to be filled by a contract appointment. That group has gone.

Contracts are now being used only to replace teachers who are absent on leave—sick leave, long service leave or accouchment leave. There are no short-term contracts required to fill places left vacant under the equitable service scheme which has gone. This has had a profound effect in the Iron Triangle, for example, where we have had major problems with an excess number of contract teachers in the past. In 1989 there were 55.5 teachers on contract in primary schools in the Iron Triangle; that has now decreased to 15.7 and we are simply replacing people on leave. There were 51.7 people on contract in secondary schools, but that has been reduced to 26.4 this year—an overall reduction in that area from 107.2 to 42.1 contract teachers. Furthermore, most of those teachers appointed on contracts in 1989 won permanency on merit in 1990. So, there has been a substantial improvement in the Iron Triangle, and that has been reflected elsewhere across the State.

Mr De LAINE: The curriculum guarantee did away with the equitable service scheme which required teachers to work in country schools. How does the Education Department now tackle the question of staffing country schools and are there any incentives to attract teachers to work in country locations?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The Director-General has touched on the abolition of the equitable service scheme which compulsorily required teachers to serve in the country. That has now been replaced with a series of incentives for teachers to serve in country schools and, as the Director-General explained, that has proved to be a successful transition of policy in that area.

The equitable service scheme was an unpopular scheme as it had evolved and was counter-productive in its effect. We were losing from the teaching service experienced and committed teachers whom we could not afford to lose. Also, it was causing instability in the staffing of many of our rural centres, so obviously it had undesirable features. That was the central theme in negotiations with the teachers union last year on the curriculum guarantee package. I will ask the Director-General to outline the new arrangements and incentives that are in place.

Dr Boston: We have a range of incentives for band 1 and band 2 teachers, band 1 teachers being those subject to automatic incremental progression to the top of band 1. There are additional incentives for band 1 teachers alone. The incentives for band 1 and band 2 teachers include the payment of \$500 for satisfactory completion of one year of

approved study to teachers who have accrued service in specified country schools that we find particularly difficult to staff. Priority is given to country applicants in relation to the HECS scholarships in tertiary institutions. We give band 1 and band 2 teachers priority for staff development and retraining in line with departmental priorities. We provide periods of leave on full pay for continuous service in designated schools, that is, one term of additional leave after six years, two terms after eight years, and one year after 10 years of service in particular hard to staff schools. Those schools may vary from year to year depending upon the staff within them and whether or not they are likely to leave at the end of the year.

We provide access to the provisions of the teachers non-metropolitan award benefits to a maximum of 10 years. We are looking at negotiated mortgage compensation or, alternatively, after the completion of seven years in a school, attracting two or more isolation points based on the expected cost of removal from that location to the metropolitan area. This scheme has been working successfully in Western Australia where, after a teacher has spent a given period of time in a particular school, the department in that State asks that teacher whether or not they want to come back or take their removal expenses as a grant. Frequently, those expenses are taken as a grant and the person stays. This saves the Education Department 50 per cent on removal expenses because not only would it have to move a teacher back to the metropolitan area but it would have to move another teacher to the country. We are looking at that proposal, but have not yet implemented it.

We provide also enhanced study leave to teachers in Aboriginal schools, which are among the hard to staff schools—one term after two years for professional development. There is an important additional incentive for band 1 teachers of an allowance equivalent to one additional salary increment step up to step 12 for teachers remaining beyond four years in a school attracting two or more isolation points, that is, a particularly difficult school to staff. Also, we provide those teachers with a placement guarantee depending upon the number of accrued isolation points. For example, a primary teacher with 25 isolation points may nominate 75 schools in the State to which they wish to move or transfer after completing their term. A secondary teacher with 25 points may nominate 25 schools within the State—usually in the metropolitan area—to which they might return, and so on.

Mr De LAINE: Will the Minister provide details of the mortgage compensation incentive?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: As the Director-General just explained, this is a matter that is still under consideration and it is possible, through current taxation incentives that are available and discussions that we have had with banking institutions, to develop a package whereby there can be a substantial financial incentive for those teachers who rent out their city-based house to rent a teacher housing house near the school to which they are transferred. That is being negotiated. As soon as we have further information we would be pleased to make it available. The difficulty I have in giving that undertaking is that I am not quite sure whether it will be available by the time the Committee is required to report. If it is, I will provide it.

I have some further information that might clarify some issues that were raised earlier today. First, with respect to the discrepancy between the figures relating to vacancy rentals, to which the member for Hayward referred earlier, the Education Department amount for 1989-90 of \$456 438 was the amount paid to the Office of Government Employee Housing. I understand that the figure of \$453 000 quoted

by the Auditor-General is prepared on an accrual basis by the Office of Government Employee Housing according to its records. Therefore, the difference of \$3 438 results from separate accounting practices in the Education Department and the Office of Government Employee Housing. I will refer that matter to both agencies to see whether it can be rationalised in future. But I am told it cannot be rationalised.

Another matter raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was the closure of the Payneham Primary School. I have obtained a copy of the letter which the member for Hartley wrote to the school on 31 October 1986 and which clarifies the position. The letter is addressed to the Secretary of the Payneham Primary School Council and states:

Dear Secretary,

Recently in the Estimates Committee of Parliament, questions were asked for the Minister of Education with regard to the criteria for school closures. The previous Minister of Education had indicated that if school enrolments consistently fell below 100 the continued viability of the school would have to be looked at.

The current Minister of Education made further comments on this matter and I am enclosing herewith the *Hansard* report containing the Minister's answer. You will note from the answer that there is no hard and fast rule. There are currently schools in the metropolitan area with fewer than 50 students but that each requires a separate decision to be taken with regard to the particular circumstances of the school.

Your sincerely, Terry Groom, member for Hartley.

Mr S.J. BAKER: That was obviously different from the advice the honourable member gave in August 1986. Last year the Committee was kindly provided with information by Ms Kolbe about 21 positions being surplus to requirement. I know that the Minister will provide information on what has happened to the 67 positions that are surplus to requirement. I note from page 164 of the Program Estimates that the number of executive, professional, technical, and administrative and clerical support staff, including the surplus to requirement figure, actually increased last year. Is the figure of surplus to requirement positions readily available?

Ms Kolbe: The group of 67 officers, relating to a reduction in the budget of 50 average full-time equivalents, has been tracked and it would be possible at this point in time to identify how many officers are still in that category. I would like to emphasise (and the Minister has already mentioned) that there is not a budget burden as they remain in the organisation and do very valuable work, because they are funded from within the budget and we are holding open other positions to pay for them.

Mr S.J. BAKER: I am pleased that that information will be provided, but there were 21 left last year. How many of those 21 are left this year?

Ms Kolbe: I do not have that information here, but I can certainly identify it. It would be a lesser number, but I am not quite certain at this point in time how many there are.

Mr S.J. BAKER: The Federal Government gave the State an extraordinary grant of \$15 million for wage cost blow-outs this year. This is the first time that the Commonwealth Government has ever done this. The Minister was talking about \$2 million. Can the Minister explain where this \$15 million will actually be spent and how much the Government is saving currently whilst this dispute on the package continues? Are we saving \$3 million or \$4 million a month at the moment?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The honourable member might like to clarify that for me. I have not seen \$15 million floating around from the Commonwealth.

Mr S.J. BAKER: Perhaps the Treasurer has kept the \$15 million that was provided for this financial year.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Under what heading is the \$15 million provided?

Mr S.J. BAKER: Under Commonwealth special grants, a one-off grant to cover wage cost blow-outs.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Yes, but that is to the State as a whole.

Mr S.J. BAKER: That is for the Education area.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: It is a question that would more appropriately be addressed to the Treasurer if there are some doubts about it, but the Commonwealth funds that are provided for education are absorbed within the education budget each year in the normal process. I can give no further information than that.

Mr S.J. BAKER: So the Minister is not aware where that \$15 million will go?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I would like the honourable member to refer to the document on which he bases that information.

Mr S.J. BAKER: The information is in the Commonwealth grants papers, which I presume the Treasurer would have supplied the Minister, being a Minister of the Government, Treasury has the direct payment for all the ministerial lines. That is as a result of the Premiers Conference.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Perhaps those documents could be looked at over the luncheon adjournment.

[Sitting suspended from 1 to 2 p.m.]

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The \$15 million cost escalation allowance quoted by the member for Mitcham prior to the luncheon adjournment comes from Commonwealth budget paper No. 4, table 62, and represents a 4.2 per cent increase on the 1989-90 outlays for education purposes. This includes higher education, TAFE, non-government and Government schools. It is not a new line (and I think the honourable member referred to it as a special payment) but is the mechanism by which the Commonwealth shows its estimate for normal cost supplementation arrangements for increases in prices, salaries, wages, goods and services, and the like.

Mr S.J. BAKER: Before lunch I also asked how much the strike would have cost teachers in wages and salaries if an agreement based on the conditions laid down by the Government was reached, say, today.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The difficulty in making that calculation is determining from which date one commences. If it is from the date the negotiations commenced, obviously, the teachers union would have had to advise its members to forgo many millions of dollars in order to argue for other elements of that package. I think it is quite clear that the teachers union is not striking for the quantum amount of \$37 200. I think that that amount is reasonably settled, although the union would wish to continue to be able to negotiate for a higher salary at an appropriate time in the future.

However, it is now negotiating for what is, in effect, an across-the-board salary increase by allowing all teachers, by a simple process, to escalate their salaries to the advanced skills teacher range. It is the view of the Government that that should be controlled by strict criteria of entrance and that the principle of merit should apply, and that is how we are going to enhance the career structure of the teaching profession and also improve the quality of education.

Mr S.J. BAKER: The Opposition is asking general questions of all Ministers in relation to their portfolios. On page 28 of the Financial Statement the Premier stated that a saving of approximately \$130 million was to be made by maintaining the program. First, what is the Education Department's share of that \$130 million? Secondly, what

are the productivity targets for the department this financial year? Thirdly, how many cars are operated by the department and, of those, how many have private number plates and how many have Government number plates?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: With respect to the overall savings program, I should indicate, as I did in the earlier introductory remarks, that the education lines were treated very generously in the overall Government strategy. I think that the budget papers indicate the alteration to individual lines, but overall the outcome for education was very favourable, and it provides for a number of new initiatives. However, I also point out that there is in place a Cabinet committee that has a brief to provide an ongoing review of expenditure programs, and that will continue during the year.

There have been a number of initiatives where productivity savings have been achieved during my period in the Education ministry. They have certainly come with the investment in new technologies in the accounting systems of the department—electronic funds transfer of teachers' salaries, the fax net, and the like—and in the macro sense. For example, the restructuring of our schools, including amalgamations and closures, has brought about considerable efficiencies in the operations of the department and has improved outcomes in the delivery of services.

We have had an ongoing rationalisation of bus routes. Indeed, this budget provides for an extension of the school bus replacement cycle, with resultant savings. There have been more efficient staff allocations to better match school enrolments (something that the Auditor-General remarked on a number of years ago), and the department has done a good deal of work, particularly within its internal audit section, to bring about a much greater relationship between its staff and other resource allocations and school enrolment figures on which those payments are based.

The development of distance mode curriculum delivery to support the curriculum guarantee package is another area where some efficiencies will be obtained but, most importantly, a much enhanced curriculum offering can be provided to students not only in remote areas of the State but also in the metropolitan area. I had better take the question about Government motor vehicles on notice, as the honourable member wanted specific numbers of vehicles in the categories to which he referred. As I explained, there is the ongoing Cabinet committee that will look at the matters to which the honourable member refers in terms of our strategy for efficiency dividends.

Mr HAMILTON: The Minister will recall that in the past I have corresponded with him about a request from the Seaton High School concerning the International Baccalaureate. On page 167 of the Program Estimates I note that an important issue identified is the provision of a senior secondary curriculum to meet the needs of a full range of post-compulsory students, but there is no mention of the International Baccalaureate, although I have heard mention of it on several occasions and, as I indicated, it is a request from the Seaton High School. Will the Minister describe the IB program and explain its role in secondary education in this State; and will he reconsider the request by the Seaton High School for such a program at that location?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The International Baccalaureate program was established in three schools in South Australia. The first was established at Pembroke School last year and this year programs have commenced at Glenunga High School and Mercedes College. It is not proposed that the program should be extended to other schools, although this matter will be reviewed at a later stage. The interest of Seaton High School and other schools is noted, but it was

never envisaged to be a program that would be widespread. It was to meet a specialist target group of students and their families in our community. It is related to students whose families are transient, particularly those involved in the major corporations, the Diplomatic Service, foreign service or the like. The demand for the course is being carefully monitored. It is attractive to some students who normally would be permanently resident with their families in this State but who want to seek entrance to universities overseas or whose families wish their children to undertake tertiary studies, at least for a time, in another country.

The International Baccalaureate course is a rigorous course leading to tertiary entrance. It is offered in schools in the Oceania region (Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea), and it provides entrance to universities throughout the world—certainly the most prestigious universities. It enables young people not to be disadvantaged by the fact that they belong to families which shift from country to country during their period of education. It equips a group of young people who particularly want to move into a career which has an international dimension to it. It will enhance the overall education offering that we provide. I am delighted to say that we have been able to achieve it in this State by very close cooperation between the Government and non-government sectors of education. There is a very good working relationship between those three schools in the development of curriculum and other programs. At this stage it is not intended that it be extended beyond those three schools.

Mr HAMILTON: I have taken note of what the Minister said about transient groups and the like. In view of the submarine contract, the South Australian Manufacturing Park and the number of people who move in and out of the West Lakes area and western suburbs, I believe that this matter is worthy of investigation, and I ask the Minister to have another look at it. I refer again to page 167 of the Program Estimates. I understand that the report on mathematics was prepared by Dr Pitman and that it has been well received by interested groups in education circles. What is the Education Department's response to that report?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The Government is indebted to the work that Dr Pitman and her colleagues carried out in order to produce their report on the study of mathematics in our schools in the senior secondary years and, indeed, the more general comments that they made about the teaching of mathematics. This arose out of the recommendations of the Gilding inquiry into tertiary entrance requirements. It provides us with a very firm basis for some new initiatives and developments in the teaching of mathematics. The Education Department has already accepted a number of the recommendations. It has put into train a series of additional programs and provided resources for them, which we think will bring about enhanced opportunities for students who are concerned to obtain the best possible tuition in mathematics.

This area has perhaps not received the priority that it should have received in Australian education systems. Also, the area has not perhaps been portrayed as challenging, attractive and leading to rewarding and interesting careers for students—particularly girls. That is now changing quite rapidly. However, a good deal of work still remains to be done in this area. I will ask Mr Boomer to outline some of the work that has been done in this important area.

Mr Boomer: Before I go into our response to the Pitman report, it might be of interest to the Committee to know that we are at an advanced stage in national collaborative curriculum work in mathematics. We have mapped the mathematics curriculum across Australia to see where the

differences and similarities are, and we are now moving towards a national statement of entitlements in mathematics. We will also be looking at a profile of attainment outcomes. Therefore, not only is South Australia responding through the work of the Gilding inquiry and Jane Pitman's work, but at national level we are moving to get rid of unnecessary differences and to look at national accountability for standards in mathematics.

The first recommendation of the Pitman report talked about the need to look at pathways, particularly in junior secondary mathematics. Our analysis has shown that students tend to drop out of mathematics before year 10, or at least to develop attitudes towards mathematics which do not lead to successful work in the senior secondary school.

Our response is twofold. The first response is that we are looking at reviewing junior secondary education overall, but, within that review of junior secondary education in 1990-91, we will be looking particularly at mathematics and within that what happens with regard to girls in mathematics that might lead them to take mathematics as a non-option in the senior secondary school. We would be looking at ways of increasing the number of girls studying mathematics. Overall, the intention would be to retain more students in mathematics in the senior school.

The Minister has also announced a program, totalling \$480 000, to be allocated to six schools which will become resource centres in mathematics in the junior secondary area. Those schools are Port Augusta High School, Craigmore High School, Underdale High School, Christies Beach, Allendale East in conjunction with Mount Gambier High School and Port Adelaide High School in conjunction with the other two girls technical schools. In that program we will be looking particularly at matters of pedagogy in mathematics, increasing the quality of teaching of mathematics in those schools, and, over a three-year period, reaching out to other schools in those areas to pass on the insights gained through that specialist work.

The second recommendation of the report talked about the need for advisory and key teachers and project officers and, in conjunction with that junior secondary mathematics resource schools project, we will be appointing five additional coordinators of mathematics whose job in the first year will be to enhance mathematics within the schools and, in succeeding years, to reach out to schools in the surrounding area. We have also appointed an officer within the Education of Girls Curriculum Unit focusing on mathematics, science and technology in relation to girls.

The fourth recommendation talks about fundamental mathematical skills. We are anticipating during 1991 a rigorous program of teacher training and development in relation to the new South Australian certificate of education. We would be hoping also for the development of a range of mathematics courses which will include a greater number of students.

One could go through the recommendations in this way. Perhaps I should refer to recommendation 13, which relates to the need for focus schools. We already have 30 focus schools in primary mathematics. In conjunction with the work that we are doing in junior secondary and the intensive work that we are doing in regard to the South Australian certificate of education, that should mean that overall we are making a comprehensive approach to the teaching of mathematics which will retain more students, particularly girls, in the senior secondary school. Overall, one can summarise by saying that over the next three years the South Australian Education Department will be giving a high priority to the teaching of mathematics, and taking very

seriously indeed all the recommendations of the Pitman report.

Mr HAMILTON: Page 56 of the Auditor-General's Report in relation to school security states:

An amount of \$811 000 (\$790 000) was paid in 1989-90 for the repair and replacement of equipment which was vandalised or stolen from Government schools. An additional amount of \$1.7 million (\$1.5 million) for repair costs to school buildings was included in the charges for the South Australian Department of Housing and Construction (Sacon) services.

The estimate of outstanding fire damage claims admitted by the Public Actuary's Office as at 30 June was \$3.3 million (\$2.7 million). Payments for security contracts, installation and maintenance of alarm systems and other security costs during 1989-90 totalled \$1 million (\$723 000).

The report of the department's security review committee, submitted in March 1988, was referred to the Minister of Education and the Under Treasurer for comment. A number of security strategies were proposed in the report which, if fully implemented, were expected to reduce the level of property loss to Government.

In July 1989, Audit expressed concern at the department's apparent lack of progress in addressing the major issues identified by the review. The department subsequently advised that, while a curfew for school properties had been introduced, it did acknowledge that a number of the review's recommendations still needed to be implemented.

What is the Education Department doing to improve school security?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This is an important matter that the department does not deal with by itself; there are other Government agencies that are intertwined in the strategy, which has been developed for some time now, to provide security for the more than 1 000 sites owned by the department around South Australia. Unfortunately, from time to time those sites are subject to attacks of vandalism and other forms of wanton destruction. For some unknown reason schools seem to be a prime target for these types of attacks not only here but also in many other places around the world.

As a result of advice, the department has done a number of things which will place us in a position where we can hopefully reduce the costs associated with arson and vandalism to our properties. The department has established a formal risk management framework which will encompass the security of school assets, and a risk management unit has been established to administer that function to work with other relevant agencies. The department's alarm and general security installation program has been accelerated significantly and the department has employed its own patrol officers to carry out work in specific locations.

The School Watch program is another technique that has been developed as part of the Government's overall crime prevention strategy, and there is provision in the budget for that. This program is being watched very carefully because I think it can have important implications for all our school properties. Indeed, we are very fortunate to have many people in the community who are committed to watching over our properties. Without their support, and the support of the broader community, we certainly would not be able to provide the degree of security that we currently do, nor, indeed, the visual surveillance of our properties, particularly during vacation periods, over weekends and so on. As I said, that program is established and ongoing, and is being monitored carefully. We provided for a curfew to be established, and appropriate sanctions associated with that, so that between the hours of midnight and 7 a.m. schools were places into which entry was prohibited. That program was introduced in December 1988 and I think that that has been successful, too, and certainly assisted the police and patrol officers in their surveillance of school properties.

The approval to employ two additional security officers will enable our security services section to be restructured,

and to provide a more effective service. Of course, then the ongoing allocation for upgrading of the alarm system and other devices that we use in our schools will proceed, and funds have been provided for that in the budget process.

Mr BRINDAL: The Program Estimates (page 174) under '1990-91 Specific Targets/Objectives', in relation to social justice, states:

Research and provide policy advice in relation to social justice objectives including draft performance indicators for the assessment of gains in social justice.

Can the Minister confirm the length of time the social justice unit of the Education Department has been in existence? Will the Minister supply a complete list of the personnel employed in this unit since its inception on a full-time, part-time and contract basis, including a brief duty statement of each person so employed? Can the Minister supply an analysis of the output of the unit since its inception, especially relating to reports, publications, and papers delivered by members of the unit?

Mr Boomer: There is no social justice unit. We have a social justice portfolio; we have an Assistant Director of Social Justice (Miss Margaret Wallace), and then within that we have a range of superintendencies, which could be said to deal more specifically with aspects of social justice. We have a superintendent of special education, a superintendent in the area of multiculturalism in education and a superintendent in the area of poverty in education, under which we have the disadvantaged schools program and the priority projects (as it is known in South Australia). We also have the country areas program, a coordinator of Aboriginal education and the superintendency of girls in education, which deals with aspects of social justice as well. Together, they form a group which looks at curriculum issues in social justice.

In addition, we have a social justice panel which involves the area personnel, the directorate of personnel, the directorate of resources, as well as the directorate of curriculum. That group looks at the overall social justice policy of the Education Department and the promulgation of targets of attainment. The Assistant Director (Ms Wallace) coordinates that work. Did the honourable member refer specifically to the portfolio of poverty in education, which involves superintendency, and which Mr Conley ran until his resignation?

Mr BRINDAL: No, I would like a breakdown of the people employed under the auspices of the Assistant Director of social justice, including the superintendents. I believe that a number of people have been employed on a contract basis under that umbrella to perform various contract tasks. We would like a list of the superintendents involved and the other people employed on a contract basis. In addition, we seek information on the output of the superintendents and the social justice unit in terms of publications, policy and anything else.

Mr Boomer: Considerable work has been done and it will take us some time to provide a breakdown of that work, but I undertake to do so. The unit came into operation towards the end of 1988, so it has been running for 19 months.

Mr BRINDAL: I refer to pages 173 and 178 of the Program Estimates and the subject of socioeconomic disadvantage. My question is based on an article which was submitted at the time of the election by a member of the Priority Projects team to the *Teachers Journal* but which the journal declined to publish because it was considered political in its nature. I quote from the article, as follows:

Recently Priority Projects held a day for triennial funding at SAIT on Greenhill Road, the venue of course being in the poverty stricken eastern suburbs and not well serviced by public transport.

Many parents were unable to attend because of transport difficulties and child-care commitments. One school principal inquired about the possibility of a taxi voucher one way, for a parent who could be driven to the conference by a teacher but who needed to leave early to be back to collect her children. The parent did not want to necessitate the teacher leaving early also. The taxi voucher request was refused with the assistant coordinator stating that if people had commitments they would just have to make arrangements themselves.

The article goes on to talk about child-care, and then states:

All this withstanding, the administrative position would have been accepted, if not agreed with, but for one fact. A few weeks later, an urn borrowed by a Priority Projects staff member was returned to the Warradale Priority Projects office via taxi and paid for out of Priority Projects funds.

The article goes on to talk about a conference on poverty, which is alluded to at page 173 of the budget document as a specific target or objective for 1989-90. The article states:

A conference on poverty at the Hotel Adelaide costing thousands of dollars with a registration of \$120 and, wait for it, \$60 for those in hardship. Priority Projects has increased the size of its professional and clerical staff to cope with the added work load of organising this momentous event.

Will the Minister look at these and other matters and report back to the Committee on their truth or otherwise?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I can understand why the article was not published in the *Teachers Journal* because it is clearly defamatory and, if the honourable member is prepared to provide me with the details of the allegations that are made in that article, I will be pleased to have them investigated, and investigated thoroughly.

Mr BRINDAL: I refer to the Program Estimates (page 162) and the 1987-88 Auditor-General's Report (page 10) with respect to invoice processing. The Auditor-General's Report highlighted potential substantial savings within the accounts payable section of the department. The Auditor-General concluded that 23 staff were engaged in processing invoices within the department and that substantial savings could be achieved by a reduction. In 1988, the Minister indicated to this Committee, I believe, that the situation was under review. In 1989, the Director of Resources (Ms Kolbe) told the Committee that, in general terms, 'We are still employing approximately the same number of staff.' Later in 1989, the Minister indicated that the number was 21.1. Is the Education Department still employing these 21 staff in the accounts payable section? Why has the process not been computerised? What is the total cost? The Minister would be aware of the oncosts of employing staff in this section.

Ms Kolbe: In the past 10 years, we have not had a manual system of payment; we have an automated system. We upgrade the front-end of processing continually. We also forward invoices, and the telephone account is one of them. We are automating the process of submission of accounts, so we are getting greater efficiencies, and we are looking at even more efficiency in that area, as we do in all others. We are more automated now than we were at the time of last year's Committee. I do not have the exact number of people concerned, so I will have to report back on that.

Mr HERON: Page 56 of the Auditor-General's Report states that about \$34 000 goes out every fortnight in salary overpayments. Why does that occur? How does the Education Department get back its money? How much is written off over a year?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This is a perennial issue and, naturally, it is a matter that needs to be checked each year. The Education Department has the largest payroll in this State. We issue in excess of 22 000 group certificates for people who are employed maybe for one day at a time and in a variety of different circumstances. The information relating to that employment comes from a variety of sources.

The crucial issue is the amount of money that is lost to general revenue as a result of those overpayments. In 1987-88, the amount written off was \$31 464. The following year, it was \$9 747 and, in the year under review (1989-90), it was \$20 579. Out of a payroll of nearly \$700 million that margin lies within the bounds of acceptability, although the matter needs to remain under review. I ask Ms Kolbe to explain to the Committee how the matter is monitored.

Ms Kolbe: It is part of the monitoring process of the supervisors who process the payroll each fortnight, and there is often a misunderstanding about this. Funds of \$36 million are identified as overpayments because we anticipate a certain number of days of payment. If someone takes leave without pay or separates from the organisation within seven days of the payday cheque being made available, that payment, which should not have been made, shows as an overpayment.

The \$36 000 which is the subject of the report by the Auditor-General is actually \$36 000 in a particular point in time although it is an average. The lowest figure in a fortnight which we recorded in the previous year was \$17 000 in new overpayments. However, most of that stems from current employees. If we look at the total amount which was given as a balance of \$313 000, we see that \$268 000 was on account of current employees. Therefore, those funds are recovered quickly very often depending on the size of the amount involved, in the following payroll. The \$36 000 is an averaged amount and that figure may become higher or lower during a particular payroll. It is not \$36 000 which adds on to each payroll. It is the same amount that is cycled around.

Great control is exercised all the time and managers in the organisation consider the level of overpayments after each pay and all attempts are being made to reduce, to the extent possible within the payroll, the amount which is the subject of overpayments.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I think that Ms Kolbe referred to a figure of \$36 million in her initial comments. The figure is actually \$36 000.

Mr HERON: Under migrant education (page 160 of the white book) an amount of nearly \$9 million is shown. Will the Minister give some details of that program?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The department accepts a responsibility for educational programs for newly arrived migrants. Indeed, in Cowandilla in the honourable member's constituency there is an educational provision for that group of young people coming into our community. One of the difficulties is being able to predict how many migrants will be coming in and from which countries and so have some capacity to respond to their needs and the language groupings from which they come.

However, that is quite an important program if young people are going to be able to take their place in the mainstream educational system quickly, because those young people are often highly motivated and want to take their place in a normal school setting. It is also important for those who are a little older and who want to gain qualifications quickly to enable them to move into the work force or higher education and training opportunities. It is an important program in our system.

Page 160 of the booklet shows the breakdown of costs associated with classroom instruction in schools, the administration and instructional support, and the curriculum development and advisory services for the migrant education program. As we can see, that is quite an extensive program in our schools employing over 200 staff.

Mr HERON: In-service training and personnel services are referred to on page 176. How much is spent on the

professional development of school staff and what is the role of the Orphanage Teachers Foundation?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The member for Fisher referred to that subject earlier. When one aggregates the total amount of expenditure in the Education Department allocated to professional development of teachers and other staff, one sees that that figure is quite substantial. I believe that it is the most generous provision for professional development of that in any of the education systems around this country. Certainly, it is far in excess of that provided for teachers in the non-government education sector, many of whom do not have relief staff provided to allow them in teaching time to upgrade their qualifications, to attend conferences and professional development programs, to attend additional study programs or to work interstate or overseas.

In addition, there are teacher exchange programs and many other and varied opportunities for professional development. The Director-General referred to the introduction of sabbatical leave for teachers who serve in country areas for certain periods. When one aggregates all those things, one sees that a substantial package of resources is provided in that area. That is an important area of expenditure because of the ever-changing needs that our teachers and schools face and the requirement to ensure that our curriculum meets the needs of our client group and the broader community. I will ask the Director-General to provide more details about that and to comment on the activities at the Orphanage (which has now replaced Raywood and the Wattle Park Teacher Centre) in terms of professional development. The Orphanage also houses the four central libraries which the Education Department previously had scattered around Adelaide and it is a major conference centre. The Orphanage Foundation provides a package of resources for high priority professional development programs, some of which are conducted at the Orphanage while others are conducted in other settings across the State.

Dr Boston: Training development expenditure overall for 1990 is estimated to be \$21.8 million rising to something like \$24.5 million in 1993. That does not include funds which should be regarded as training and development funds, for example, funds for TRT days at school level for training and development and funds used for the development of focus schools, the development and training functions of which Mr Boomer referred to earlier. All up we would say that, with those counted, our expenditure on training and development at the moment would be something like \$42 million which, on a per capita basis in relation to the number of teachers, is far ahead of the expenditure in any other State and indicates the priority which the department places on maintaining and enhancing the schools for the teachers who are, of course, the most critical resource which the department has for the work which it has to do.

The Orphanage teachers centre has been a resounding success already, even in the short time it has been established. It is certainly ahead of anything else of its type in the country. Indeed, perhaps there is nothing else quite like it in the country. It has become a professional home and a professional conference centre for teachers and it is delivering a range of programs and acting as a venue for a number of conferences.

When we look at the intensity of the centre's use, we realise how well the money that has been put into it and the \$2 million Orphanage Foundation grant has been used. For example, from January this year to the end of August, 20 667 teachers and other people passed through the Orphanage on training and development programs of various types.

We had 739 daytime bookings and 139 bookings at evenings and weekends, 97 being non-departmental, and we made in excess of \$2 000 from hire over this period of three months. Cash sales for departmental publications for the past six months amounted to \$21 200 and cash sales of the Wattle Park publications, which are available through the book shop at the Orphanage, amounted to about \$6 000. Also, the Orphanage houses the largest single collection of educational resource material in the largest single education library in the State, which is available to not only Education Department teachers but to teachers in Catholic and non-government schools. That library and its information search capacity has been used very much by teachers since the Orphanage opened. We believe it is the key to maintaining and extending teacher quality in this State.

Mr SUCH: I refer to pages 173 to 175 of the Program Estimates. Given that the department runs excellent programs for girls, and bearing in mind that the statistical summary that was tabled today showed that retention rates for male students of the original year 8 cohort staying at Government schools until year 12 are significantly below those for female students, what specific programs is the department organising to assist boys with learning disabilities or behavioural problems, or to assist with other important aspects of their learning.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The simple answer is that all of the department's programs are aimed at doing that, but we are now embarking to a larger extent on programs with the capacity to pick up particular groups of students who find it difficult to participate or to continue to participate in the education process or to access certain curriculum components of our overall educational offering. That is referred to in the social justice strategy as one source of information with respect to those programs—whether children are suffering because of a socio-economic disadvantage or whether it is because of a physical or mental disability or geographic isolation. A variety of reasons can cause this group of young people to be in such a position, and that is part of the work of the director responsible for social justice programs.

One needs to look at the career paths followed by both boys and girls, the opportunities that are available for boys to progress through training programs in TAFE colleges that may not be available to girls, the career opportunities in the work force for boys in pursuit of an explanation for the lower retention rates of boys as opposed to girls, and so on.

Mr Boomer: While the statistics show a greater retention of girls into the senior school, I think we need to look at those statistics alongside statistics of entry into technical and further education. When we put together the post-compulsory training and education and technical and further education, it is not necessarily true that we are losing all of those boys from education, as appears at first glance. At the same time, we need to look at the whole question of retention and, in particular, at improved counselling of students. To that end, through the initiative of the Year of School and Industry, which will be carried on, we are looking at careers education advice; the extension of our work experience program; and, at the senior secondary level, the extension of vocationally oriented courses in fields such as horticulture and hospitality and tourism which would be attractive to all students but particularly to some of those boys who may leave school early because they are offered a job.

One of the problems is that when these boys get a job it may not be lasting. We are concerned that boys may leave school at year 10 for the quick attraction of a job and find themselves out of work at the age of 18 or 19 years. So, we are looking at counselling students on the need to go through

to year 12 because, quite clearly, there is a correlation between work opportunities and the length of attendance at school—the longer they stay at school, the better their chances of acquiring a permanent job.

In summary, we are looking at the whole question of retention and at cooperative efforts with the technical and further education section in particular for the cross-accreditation of courses that are vocationally oriented. We hope that, when we combine the statistics on students in TAFE with those for the secondary education system, we will find that all students, both boys and girls, are being retained to an equal extent right through to year 12.

Mr SUCH: Will the Minister provide a considered response to my question in respect of specific programs that will be offered to boys in the State school system?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I would be pleased to do that.

Mr SUCH: My next question relates to the matter of cleaning (page 162 of the Program Estimates and page 59 of the Auditor-General's Report). Does the department agree that the tendering process for renewal of industrial cleaning contracts could 'provide benefits to the department in the context of evaluating current cleaning requirements prior to the tender call'; and, given that the average cost per square metre for industrial contracts is 28 per cent lower than for petty contractors, does the Minister concede that in the long term the potential annual saving could be up to \$3.5 million? Further, are all central area and regional offices cleaned by use of industrial contractors and, if not, what is the percentage?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will take the latter question on notice and provide the details to the honourable member. It is generally agreed that substantial savings could be made by moving to a greater use of industrial contractors. Of course, there are practical difficulties in doing that. We have existing contractual obligations and a change in policy would require negotiation by the respective parties. However, this is a path down which not only the Education Department but other public sector agencies that require large-scale cleaning programs have been embarking in recent years. We believe that savings could be made and that we could eliminate some undesirable practices that have occurred over the years with respect to some cleaning contractors who have taken short cuts in the cleaning process, have adopted undesirable industrial relations and employment practices, and have proved generally to be unsatisfactory.

That is generally not the case with large industrial cleaners who do serve the State very well in regard to those areas of responsible employment practices. So, this matter is receiving ongoing attention and is being monitored by the department. I will ask Ms Kolbe to add to that.

Ms Kolbe: It is under active consideration at the moment.

Mr SUCH: I refer to the Program Estimates, page 183, and to the Auditor-General's Report, pages 54 and 55. The Auditor-General is very critical of the overuse of committees by the Education Department and, in particular, he concludes that there is an apparent duplication of committees both within area directorates and between area and central directorates; some committees lacked a clear understanding of their purposes and some committees appeared uncertain as to their role. He further concluded that there was scope to reduce committee numbers and members as well as rationalising the frequency of meetings.

On the morning of the release of this damning report the Minister defended the committee structure and said that he wanted to strengthen it even further. Will the Minister provide the following information for all 169 committees identified by audit, and any others identified by audit for 1989-90, to cover the name of the committee, the members

and organisations represented where applicable, the terms of reference of each committee, the cost of each committee and the remuneration payable to members, the number of meetings held and the work undertaken and achieved by those committees in 1989-90?

Does the Minister now accept the view of the Auditor-General that there is 'scope to reduce the number of committees and members' in the department? Will he now order a complete review of all committees and not just rely on the supposed ongoing review being conducted by the department?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I think there is some slight confusion here. Earlier in this Committee I was asked by an honourable member a question about a category of committees and I undertook to provide that information. I understood it related to about 40 committees, I think it was, that were of a central nature to the department. The honourable member is now asking for details of a broader spread of committees. I assume that the second group actually embraces the first group and goes further. I would be pleased to look into that if that is the case. Would the honourable member clarify that?

Mr SUCH: I would hope that it does embrace it. At the top of page 55 of the Auditor-General's Report, he identifies a total number of 169 departmental committees, comprising 94 at the central office and 75 in area offices. I trust that that does embrace the lesser figure the Minister quoted.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: We will provide that information. I will ask the Director-General to comment on this work. I certainly stand by the comments I made. The use of committees and the formal consultative processes established in a department such as Education are quite fundamental to its effectiveness, and the involvement of people outside the Education Department is very valuable indeed. That does not mean that these committees should not be reviewed or assessed, diminished or increased. One would hope that we would not have to substantially increase the number of committees, but we would certainly want to have a system that is capable of forming them when that is necessary and, of course, deleting committees when no longer required. I did not, as the honourable member has, read the Auditor-General's Report as being extremely critical: I thought that his comments were constructive and have led to a review process within the Education Department. This is not a matter that needs just looking at in the instant: an ongoing review process needs to be established across the department.

The Auditor-General displayed a sense of humour in commenting on this matter (it is the only time that I have seen this in an Auditor-General's Report), wherein he said, 'I am reminded of the statement that committees keep minutes but take hours.' I guess we are all able to attest to that. He did refer to the cost associated with committees, and that presumably is the question of concern to members in this instance. We have to ensure that the cost benefit is there and can be attested to. The Director-General might like to add to that.

Dr Boston: The Auditor-General's Report, on page 55, identifies the committees, or groups of people—and I will come back to that point—which he labels committees, and that totals 169. Certainly, that requires close scrutiny, which it now receives. The Auditor-General's Report describes the process we have in train to reduce that 169 and, in fact, when we produce the report for which the honourable member has asked it will be found that there has been a substantial improvement in the situation.

In a very large organisation such as the Education Department, the committee is a very effective form of cutting

down paperwork. If one brings together the people concerned with implementing a decision and briefs them on how that decision is to be put in place, the amount of paper shuffling and moving of dockets is considerably reduced. They are, in certain circumstances, a highly efficient form of working. Certainly, too, in an organisation such as ours, which is going through a major changing process, the involvement of people and the consultation that comes through a committee is very important in building a constituency for that committee and then creating a climate for change.

So, they would be two criteria which I would apply in a committee review: are they efficient and are they necessary to produce the sort of change we require? The area and central matter, I think, is one which needs to be treated very carefully. The central directorates in the central office are essentially concerned with policy development; program development; and performance, evaluation and review. The area directorates are essentially concerned with management and delivery of services. So one could have, for example, a committee in the centre called a personnel committee, and a committee in the northern area called a personnel committee which did quite different things. One is concerned with policy and performance evaluation, looking at how we carry out our work, while the other is concerned with actually putting staff into schools and making sure that that was done properly.

From time to time, too, the people concerned with the operations in the area and the people concerned with the policy development in the centre need to come together. There might be meetings between them, irregularly or even regularly. They are necessary and they are part of our daily business. It does not seem to me that they are extraneous committees and that we should say, 'All employees who are concerned with the same thing should never meet, but should do all their business by sending dockets to each other or by making telephone calls.' There is, without doubt, scope to reduce and to become more efficient, and that is precisely why, in the light of the Director-General's report, we have taken the action that we have put in train.

That is being taken very seriously and all unnecessary or extraneous meetings of people are being put to the sword. On the other hand, we are not going to cease this as a method of operating entirely. We will still have to have working groups, *ad hoc* groups that come together for specific projects and specific purposes, and, importantly, being a human service agency which must relate to the community, we have to have an extensive consultation process. We are criticised fairly frequently for not consulting widely enough; we are also criticised for having too many committees. We have to find the mid-point and strike a happy balance.

Mr SUCH: Will the Minister provide an interim report on the department's response to the Auditor-General's concerns?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will provide that information within the time frame for this Committee.

Mr De LAINE: Page 166 of the Program Estimates, under '1989-90 Specific Targets/Objectives', refers to 'further support for the management of student behaviour': what support has been given to improve discipline and student behaviour in our schools?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This is an area of some concern in the community. There is a perception in the minds of some people—although it is often in the minds of those who have least contact with our schools—that schools lack discipline—or young people, more so, lack discipline. After a close analysis of this situation in recent years, and partic-

ularly in work that has arisen out of decisions taken by the Human Services Subcommittee of the Cabinet, we have focused our attention on a group of students in our schools who are suffering from severe behavioural problems. We have developed a series of strategies to provide assistance to those young people either working within the school setting or by removing them from the school setting for periods so that they can access those support programs. Thereby we can provide to them a much greater degree of cooperation between health, welfare and education agencies to assist this young group of people.

Members will be aware that one student who is suffering from a very severe behavioural disorder can disrupt not only a class but a whole school. It takes an enormous amount of time, energy and emotions of many staff members to rectify these situations when they occur. We are now able to indicate that substantial progress has been made in dealing with this group of young people in our schools.

In addition, we have provided, for the first time, a network of primary school counsellors—we have had counsellors available in our secondary schools but not in our primary schools—and that initiative has also proved very valuable in identifying those young people with behavioural problems and in working with them in a broader context to assist them and their families to work their way through those difficulties and to access appropriate specialist services.

One of the most interesting areas of activity in professional development in recent times has been the whole area of teacher skills in dealing with the management of behaviour in the classroom. There is a great deal of interest by teachers and parents in embracing some of the newer concepts to achieve orderly learning environments and discipline, not only in the classroom but in the whole context of a young person's involvement in the school. That is certainly being encouraged and developed right across our schools system.

It is interesting that now the use of corporal punishment is almost nil in our system; it has been phased out over the past five years and is being replaced with what are very clearly more effective, more lasting and more constructive forms of discipline and behaviour modification. So, there is a great deal being done in this area and we would hope that some of the strategies and plans that we have developed could well be used in other jurisdictions, and particularly marketed by the South Australian Education Department.

Mr De LAINE: I refer to the socioeconomic disadvantaged support program on page 161 of the Program Estimates. Are school card grants paid from this line? The Education Department budget brochure states that this scheme costs \$6.7 million. How is this scheme an improvement on the old Government assisted students (GAS) scheme?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The development of the school card, which was announced by the Government late last year, is an innovative scheme which does very much improve on the Government assisted student scheme, which it replaced this year. First and most importantly, it provides additional cash to students and their families to access educational opportunities and to provide for essential items such as books. The grants to students increased quite dramatically to \$100 for primary school students and to \$150 for secondary school students. It is interesting to see how that grant has increased quite dramatically during the period of this Government.

In 1983 the GAS scheme provided \$33 per student. In recent years additional grants have been made to schools, although they went to schools with high numbers of Gov-

ernment assisted students in order to access equipment and develop curriculum materials that would assist the most needy students in those schools. This card actually provides for the expenditure decisions to be based around that family, so they may choose to spend the whole of the money on payment for school books and the school fee, and then have additional money left over to access, for example, the cost of school excursions or other materials required during the year, or other purchases that are part of the costs of providing an education in that school. That choice is one for those individuals and families to make. In fact, it is a form of credit card that the young person has, and they can spend that money during the school year.

In developing this particular program and form of assistance, advice was taken from senior policy officers of the Commonwealth Department of Social Security who had been working on the policy initiatives emanating from the Federal Government to support students. I must acknowledge the very important changes that have been made at the Federal level to provide additional financial support for students to encourage them to stay at school longer, and to provide financial support directed to families with school age children; that is the incentives that were provided to encourage young people to stay at school rather than to leave school and access the dole, and the like, as they could previously. We wanted this system to dovetail into the general philosophy that was being applied by the Federal Government.

The feedback that has already been received from schools is very positive in its implementation in this first year. I think some areas may need to be looked at as time goes on, particularly with respect to students who change schools during the year, so that we can have the ability to ensure that the money actually follows the students around. Administrative arrangements like that need to be more sophisticated, and that will most certainly be looked at.

This scheme is provided to students who meet the same eligibility criteria in the non-government sector. I know that it is very much appreciated by those students and their families because it helps them to gain access to educational opportunities that would not otherwise be available to them.

Mr De LAINE: Is that \$6.7 million included in the \$8.804 million under that line for administration and instructional support?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Yes, it is.

Mr De LAINE: My third question relates to the curriculum development in primary and secondary education on pages 166 and 167 of the Program Estimates. This is of particular interest to me because this important resource is based in my electorate. I understand that the Education Department has undertaken some interesting work in this area in connection with the sailing ship *Failie*. Will the Minister give us some details of this initiative?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Prior to asking the Director-General to comment on the *Failie* project and the educational component of that vessel, I should point out that, with respect to the school card, the budget provides for an increase in payments for primary students to \$106 next year and \$159 for secondary students.

Dr Boston: The *Failie* school ship project is very interesting and exciting. It aims to provide students with experiences while on a voyage which they would not otherwise have. Curriculum materials have been prepared by a team of teachers and consultants for use in preparing to go on the ship, on the ship and subsequently. It is a package for primary students which supports students participating in single day sailing voyages and consists of materials in areas such as environmental activities, singing sea shanties, writ-

ing poems, sea skills, navigation, boat handling, and so on. The secondary package for Year 10 students supports students engaging in a 4-day program: one day in Port Adelaide and three days in the Gulf. That consists mainly of environmental activities relating to biological science, physical science, astronomy, our heritage generally, geography, geology, water chemistry and so on.

The students fill out a personal log provided at the commencement of the sail. They are also given certificates of achievement which secondary students can place in their personal portfolios at the end of the sail. We may in due course have some of those personal logs published in a form which will be capable of being used by subsequent students as part of the further programs. A range of equipment has been purchased to work with the ship, using Foundation South Australia funding. We are placing on the ship stereoscopic microscopes, a tow net for plankton, compasses, star charts for use in astronomy and various teaching materials.

Our overall costs to date in developing this material have been very low—\$9 000 in total—but for that we have a remarkably exciting and innovative program which will be used not only by Government school students but by students in the Catholic and independent schools which have also been involved in putting this material together. It is a very good extension. We hope to make this experience available not only to students in our general primary and secondary program, but increasingly to students with disabilities who would benefit very greatly, I think, from a specially adapted program on the sailing ship.

Mr De LAINE: As a supplementary question, are there any plans to utilise that other marvellous Port Adelaide resource, the *One and All*, in a similar way?

Dr Boston: This has been put together in connection with the *Failie*, but we have a program here which could be used on virtually any sailing ship, or even power boats which become available for teaching and curriculum use. To that extent, it is portable.

Mr BRINDAL: My first question relates to social justice and can be found at page 173 of the Program Estimates. I understood that in answer to an earlier question from the member for Fisher the Director-General said that the general policy of the Department was that policy programs and performance were now handled centrally while management and delivery of service was handled at area level. Is that correct?

Dr Boston: Yes.

Mr BRINDAL: I refer to a minute of enclosuring which was sent out by Director-General Steinle, dated 6 April 1987. It related to the equity program of the then Commonwealth Schools Commission. That minute of enclosure states:

2. The proposal for such devolution is consistent with action taken within the department to devolve all its operational activity to areas, with central directorates performing policy development, monitoring and coordinating roles.

3. I have decided that for 1987 administration of the above programs should be devolved wholly or partly to areas, as set out in more detail below for each program.

Earlier this year I had occasion to write to the Minister seeking information about these programs, and the Minister gave me the courtesy of a reasonably detailed reply. As part of the minute of enclosure, the staffing levels for 1987 were listed for priority projects as one level 2 assistant coordinator, a project officer, one level 3 coordinator, 3.6 centrally based field staff, 0.2 in the eastern area, 1.5 in the western area, with an actual total of 5.3. The Minister's letter indicated a significant increase in staff, not regionally but centrally based. What steps, if any, have been taken towards the devolution of these programs as instructed by the Direc-

tor-General at the time; or have the Director-General's minutes of enclosure been rescinded and, if so, when; and, if no steps have been taken for the devolution, why not; or, alternatively, when will they be taken?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I do not think one can talk about specific cases and generalisations at the same time, particularly with respect to Commonwealth-funded programs which have attached to them certain accountability requirements. The honourable member's example is not really one from which one can draw the conclusions that he has drawn from it. However, I will ask the Director-General to explain the process that is taking place. We should be mindful of the work that has been done in the department in terms of its administration, its management structure, the devolution of responsibility in the department and, of course, the external work that has been done by the Public Accounts Committee of this Parliament on these issues.

Dr Boston: I should like to make some broad remarks. I am not familiar with Mr Steinle's minute from which the honourable member quoted. I can respond to that and the further question in some detail and prepare a response for the Minister to make available. The broad structure that we are working towards is increased devolution of activity and responsibility to schools within the overall structure of the objectives and purposes of the State education system and its particular curriculum directions which are specified within the charter taking education into the twenty-first century.

We want the schools to have a far greater capacity to place resources against their educational objectives; that is, to respond locally to the imperatives as they see them within the overall confines of the State education system. The purpose of the central directorates is to develop the broad policy in each of our areas of activity which subsequently goes up for approval; to develop programs and materials to support those policies; and to evaluate and review our performance.

In addition, in some areas there is still a State-wide coordinating function, not dealing with the detail of the administration or detailed service delivery, but exercising a broad management overview of our activities, particularly, as the Minister said, in relation to Commonwealth-supported activities. Change is still occurring there. Devolution is still occurring there but in different areas at a different pace. We have not cut across with a scythe and said, 'This happens in the same way in all areas of activity immediately'. We have established the devolution objective as a goal and are moving towards it at a different rate, in a different way with different areas of activity. The priority projects area, to which the honourable member refers, is one of the Commonwealth-funded activities. I would like to prepare a detailed response for the Minister to submit to the Committee about where we are going specifically with devolution in relation to this area.

Mr BRINDAL: When providing information, could the Minister point out anywhere in the DEET guidelines where the devolution of programs to areas is precluded because my understanding of those guidelines this year is that it is encouraged? I would be grateful if the Minister could take that on board as part of his response. In respect of Program Estimates (page 162), what is the cost of the curriculum guarantee for the year 1989-90? What is the estimated cost of that guarantee for the year 1990-91? Does the Government still believe that the cost over four years to the year 1992-93 will be \$54 million? How many schools have established their curriculum guarantee implementation committee? Will the Government honour the commitment it made in the last week of the election campaign that students are

guaranteed that the 1989 curriculum is the absolute minimum offering?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Reference is made to the costs in the budget documents that have been released by the department.

Dr Boston: It would be preferable for the question to be broken down into a number of parts. If the honourable member could enumerate the items singularly those questions could be answered.

Mr BRINDAL: I am prepared for the Minister to take that question on notice. The Program Estimates (page 161) states that the junior sports policy of the Government has included a decision not to have interstate competitions for all primary school-aged students. This strategy has been opposed by a number of sporting organisations such as the SANFL. Can the Minister confirm that earlier this year either he or the Director-General wrote to their counterparts in the Northern Territory promising South Australia's support for the 1992 Pan Pacific Games? If so, what will now occur? Has the department, through the South Australian Primary School Amateur Sports Association (SAPSASA), also promised that association's involvement in a range of other interstate competitions for 1991, and what will happen to those commitments? What is the cost of SAPSASA's involvement in interstate competitions? Why does the Minister oppose under 12 footballers or netballers playing in interstate competition?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Any allegation that we are not encouraging competitive sports in the primary school sector is simply not true. To interpret any of these decisions in that way is not valid. Clearly, every time a football, netball or korf ball team—or whatever the activity—goes on to the field, it is a competitive sport. It is very much a part of the education process; that is, being able to participate in competitive sporting activities, to be able to win, lose and, most importantly, participate. It is of great concern to us that so many young people drop out of organised sporting activities. So, in the allocation of scarce various resources, we want to ensure that they are most effectively used.

With respect to primary school involvement in national sporting competitions, we have been faced with a number of States withdrawing from competition in recent years. Indeed, South Australia's financial involvement in such competition has been greater than any other State in this country. We provided quite substantial support by way of relief teaching backup and other expenses in that area. This has been the subject of a great deal of scrutiny and involvement by officers of other agencies in the development of our junior sports policy.

Not only do we need to develop that policy as an Education Department but also we need to do it in concert with other providers in the community so that we can embrace all the resources that we can to provide sporting opportunities for young people, rather than go it alone in the education system, or to distort the use of the Education Department's resources where that simply can no longer be justified. This area is always open to emotional blackmail and to wild statements about what are the real intentions of the department. Of course, there are very strong vested interests in this area also. I think those who study the reality of the situation will see the validity of the policies that are being developed by the Education Department and by the Department of Recreation and Sport in this area.

Mr BRINDAL: Her Majesty's loyal Opposition is not given to making wild statements. It merely asks questions of the Minister at the table. Do I understand from the Minister's answer that the Education Department is neither

philosophically nor educationally opposed to competitive sport at junior level?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: At primary school level, there is an age at which it should commence. That has been the subject of debate. My comments about some of the wild statements were not directed at members of the Opposition, although they are capable of doing so. I do not think they were on this occasion. This is an area that is prone to some emotion. One must determine an age whereby one participates in competitive sports, although that is reasonably well settled these days. We have to make decisions about whether we will apply resources for these national competitions.

Dr Boston: The junior sports policy arose out of the review of children's sport which was undertaken by Simon Forrest and from work which was done in the Department of Recreation and Sport. As a result of that work, a very clear policy has been developed and is guided fundamentally by the need to provide skills development for children, particularly girls, and single sex competition as a run-up to mixed sex competition once the skill development has been enhanced.

Girls have not been succeeding in mixed sex sports because the skills development component has not been there. The emphasis in the new policy is to provide those skills through Aussie Sports and other areas to the point at which girls move into competition in single sex sports, as do boys and, in due course, to mixed sex sports. There is absolutely no opposition—on the contrary there is an absolute commitment—to competition in sport as part of the curriculum of the school, and to competition between sporting associations, and that can occur at primary level. We envisage that SAPSASA (South Australian Primary Schools Amateur Sports Association) will continue to organise the inter-school sporting programs, which will take place between schools in football and a range of other sports, during school time and on Saturday mornings when they are seen as being under the aegis of the school, that is, being part of the curriculum of the school.

The Junior Sports Development Unit will have responsibility for overseeing that, when a sport at primary level is a mixed sex sport in a school, it will be a mixed sex sport in club competition. That dichotomy of some sports being mixed sex at school and single sex outside will go. That is an important aspect of the policy. The only thing changing concerns inter-State sports for primary children, which we believe is less appropriate than talent squads and high level skill development for children who are identified through competitions in schools and between schools as being outstanding young sports people. We are saying that it is far better to put our resources into skilling up those children who go on to competitive sport at secondary level, which will be inter-State, than simply sending, for example, a diving squad of primary children to Queensland where each child gets four or eight dives and nothing further happens.

Mr BRINDAL: Along the Ascot Park model?

Dr Boston: Yes. There is absolutely no opposition to competition. Indeed, we are pushing that very strongly and SAPSASA has a very clear role in promoting it. Not all States have been involved in the Pan-Pacific Games. For example, Western Australia has never been in it, or not for a long time. We will recommend to the Minister when this policy is adopted (it has not yet been to Government) that South Australia does not participate in the Pan-Pacific Games at primary level but does so at secondary level.

Mr BRINDAL: At what age or year level will SAPSASA be involved in organising competitive sports between schools?

Dr Boston: SAPSASA's task will be to act as the agent of the Education Department in performing what is essentially a curriculum task. We see sport as a curriculum matter both within the school and between schools. Within the school, sport will be organised by teachers; between schools, it will be organised by SAPSASA. SAPSASA will be an agency of the department, accountable to the Director-General. It will be resourced to do its task, as it is at the moment, with funding and with positions, such as that of the Executive Director. It will also be resourced with TRT funding to assist the organisation of inter-school sporting competitions.

Mr BRINDAL: I am interested not so much in the resourcing level but in the age level. Will it involve year 6 and year 7 students? Where does inter-school sport start?

Dr Boston: At upper primary, years 6 and 7. However, it may not remain at that level.

Mr BRINDAL: I refer to page 160 of the Program Estimates and pages 53 and 54 of the Auditor-General's Report with respect to teacher contact time. For the second year in a row, the Auditor-General has been critical of the average non-instruction time of teachers in high schools as being greater than the allowance implies in the staffing formula. Does the department agree that up to \$7 million could be saved by a reduction of 5 per cent in the non-instruction time of teachers? In what specific respects does the department's definition of non-instruction time differ from that used by the Auditor-General? Why has the advice provided by the Director-General that 'a monitoring process will be in place by the 1990 academic year' not been implemented?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: May I first make some general comments and then ask the officers to add to them. I appreciate the interest of the Auditor-General and the continued interest of the Auditor-General's office in this area of the department's activities. However, one needs to be careful about drawing substantial conclusions from a review of only 16 of our schools. The results of that review indicate that the average non-contact time for teachers was substantially higher in those schools being 27 per cent, than the allowance implied in the staffing formula, which is 20 per cent. The non-contact time of country teachers was generally well below that for metropolitan teachers, and that is also a matter of concern.

Seven of the 16 schools surveyed had a total instruction time of less than 1 575 minutes a week per teacher, which is the minimum allowed under the Education Act regulations. At the regional level and above, there was comment about the need for a review structure to monitor these results and to try to achieve a greater degree of uniformity and conformity with the established provision of teaching time and non-teaching time for teachers.

The answer to the honourable member's question in a sense also revolves around the definition of 'teaching time'. That definition is currently the subject of industrial disputation between some teachers and the Education Department. That is obviously being considered by the Auditor-General in his discussions with the Education Department about our acting upon the concerns that he has expressed to us. I make those general comments and now ask the Director-General to comment on the more specific issues raised by the honourable member.

Dr Boston: We believe that we are successfully addressing the issue identified by the Auditor-General and have responded effectively in a book entitled *Human Resources Allocation to Schools 1990*, which the Minister might wish to table before the Committee.

It is very difficult to define 'instruction time'. I believe that the Education Department officers and officers of the Auditor-General had some difficulty in reaching a joint

description of contact time and non-contact time given the nature of schools today. The notion of contact time as simply a person standing before a class with a stick of chalk and writing on a blackboard is a false vision of what teaching is all about today. It is necessarily a far more complex activity than that.

In *Human Resources Allocation to Schools 1990* we define the instruction time for the student as 1 600 minutes per week, which is in the range specified by the regulations. The average contribution expected by various categories of staff to the schools total provision of instruction time is specified in appendix II of the book. That appendix is lengthy and complex and it is probably best to table it.

For example, for a primary teacher the contact time is said to be .88, that is 88 per cent of 1 600 minutes per week. On average, in a given primary school over the whole year, each teacher is expected to be engaged in instruction (the term used in the Act) for at least 1 408 minutes a week. The book contains similar definitions for teachers in other categories.

'Instruction' is defined as teaching which is regular, time-tabled and with a consistent group of students for whom that teacher has an ongoing responsibility. Those are the key elements of the definition of 'instruction', and we believe that definition is educationally and administratively sound and perhaps a clearer statement of what instruction is than we were able to reach in our earlier discussions with the Auditor-General.

The definition includes class teaching in any subject such as year 4 mathematics, year 10 English, mother tongue maintenance or English as a second language. Pastoral care and home group activities in which at least some of the activities are designed to enhance the personal development of students, that is, home group type activities, are seen as instruction. As I am sure the honourable member is aware, those activities are a very important part of education in schools today.

Electives are also part of instruction including electives for students in different sorts of areas of activity to extend and broaden the curriculum, taken regularly either weekly or more frequently. Tutoring which is regular and time-tabled is also instruction. That includes working with students who are taking subjects by open access teaching and by the distance mode, for example, students of the School of the Air or students working with notes in conjunction with DUCT, and working with students of the Correspondence School, to become the Open Access College. That is all part of instruction. Special education support, including the new arrivals program, is also instruction. Similarly, resource based learning—working with students in the field of information systems, in libraries and with computers and so on, assisting them to research and investigate the subject—is also instruction.

In addition, next year in the 1991 revision of our book we are extending that definition to include three new areas: relief teaching, which is relief work done by a teacher, usually in a secondary school, to cover for the absence of another teacher; teacher librarianship work; and, lastly and importantly, given our critical role in equipping students for the world of work, the setting up and supervision of work experience at secondary level.

We believe that we are progressing steadily with the support and guidance of the Auditor-General, and I believe that his work has been important to us. We have a definition of instruction now which is very robust in that it is a real reflection of what teachers do in a school and it can be measured, recorded and used for accountability purposes.

It can be built into our formula and applied from the point of view of allocating resources to the job in hand.

Mr BRINDAL: I express some surprise that the last three areas mentioned by the Director-General that will be added next year have not already been added. I ask the Minister to provide a copy of that document for the Committee, and I seek to clarify whether it contains a better data base than the one used by the Auditor-General; and, if the Minister has a better data base, will he provide the figures which he considers to be more appropriate, since he has cast doubt on the size of the Auditor-General's sample?

Dr Boston: The amount of relief teaching, teacher librarian work and work experience is at present calculated at school level and has not been included in the booklet or the definition supplied to the Auditor-General. The key thing is that they will be included in the next issue.

Mr Wauchope: The format is being worked out in collaboration with the Auditor-General's team. To date, we have had three meetings to discuss the data base and the collection and monitoring of it at school level. The booklet submitted by the Director-General is the 1990 booklet, the first part of which has been rewritten for 1991 and includes the new definition which is acceptable to the Auditor-General. We should bear in mind that the calculations done in 1989 were done on the old definition, so the Auditor-General calculated on a definition which, in practice, was not able to be checked, say within 16 schools. So, I do not think that the Minister was casting doubt, but a different premise was used.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This document was prepared for distribution to all schools in the 1990 school year, and I am pleased to make it available to the Committee.

Mr HERON: I refer to the isolated education program on page 161 of the Program Estimates and ask: what support is given to students in rural and isolated areas?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The provision of educational services to students in remote and isolated areas has occupied a great deal of the department's attention because, in reviewing the provision of educational opportunities offered to students, it is clear that there are implications for all students because the distance education technology is advancing so rapidly that it is providing opportunities for students in the metropolitan area to access a wide variety of curriculum which was not available to them previously.

It is interesting to see the number of students now learning languages, music and other subjects, by the distance education methodology. In the development of a new distance education strategic plan for the department, this has been taken into account. It has been decided that we will establish an open access college, which will begin next year and will be part of the open access strategic plan, which was launched early this year. The college will replace the role and function of the South Australian Correspondence School and the Port Augusta School of the Air, both of which will close at the end of this year.

The open access college will be multi-campus, and the city campus will be colocated with the Marden High School on the current Marden High School site. The non-metropolitan campus will be situated in Port Augusta and associated with the school on a site yet to be determined. The college will develop course materials in Marden and will open an access materials unit on that site offering centralised and decentralised delivery and a choice of learning modes for students.

This initiative has been welcomed by everyone associated with the provision of distance education, and we are concerned to see that these new arrangements progress as speedily as possible. It is interesting to note that the

correspondence school is the largest of our schools and that the majority of its students reside in metropolitan Adelaide. So, the nature and function of this school is complex, but it reaches a group of students who, for one reason or another, cannot access the normal and traditional educational offering by way of the ordinary community based schools.

The opportunities that this new college will open up are enormous and we hope to cooperate with other States, particularly our neighbouring States to the east, with respect to access to satellites, other means of communication and the sharing of curriculum development so that there will be a greater spread of services and more effective penetration of young people in isolated areas.

In the context of the development of new distance education opportunities, we are progressing with the provision of student accommodation in rural areas and, in conjunction with a recently announced Commonwealth program, we are establishing cottages in a number of key rural centres so that students can leave their homes but reside in reasonably close proximity so that they can return to their homes on weekends or for longer vacations. In this way, they will be able to access a wide cross-section of curriculum in those major centres which the department wants to build up as education centres.

It is interesting that in cities such as Port Augusta, where there is a joint year 12 program between the two State schools and the Catholic school, we have been able to double the year 12 curriculum offering. In that way we hope that some of those people approaching senior secondary years will move into the larger cities to receive support by way of accommodation when, otherwise, they would have had to abandon their studies or receive a very narrow curriculum offering. With these programs in mind, we are making considerable progress.

Dr Boston: This is a very exciting new venture for South Australia and it will be critical to the development and extension of curriculum not only in country schools but in city schools as well. It will be vital to the expansion of the range of curriculum that we will be able to offer in areas where teachers are relatively few in number.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: It is estimated that the capital cost for relocation of the correspondence school to the Marden High School will be \$1.3 million. There will be use of the existing vacant space at that school and, indeed, some new facilities there. The recurrent savings on rental of the 13th and 14th floors of the central city location that the Correspondence School currently occupies will be \$412 000 per annum.

Mr HERON: One of the issues identified in the description of support services (page 183) is the introduction of assets management. Will the Minister tell the Committee what has been achieved and what is planned in this area?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I referred to this earlier today particularly with respect to arson and vandalism. The asset stock of the department is very substantial indeed. We have assets in the department valued at approximately \$3 billion. Plant is, of course, deteriorating in its usable value and, whilst appreciating in property value, it is an enormous burden to maintain that building stock, particularly in a climate of a very substantial decrease in enrolment, reducing the use of those facilities. That is why the rationalisation program that we have embarked upon in recent years has allowed us to free up some of those facilities, to dispose of them and return the revenue we have generated from them into more appropriate maintenance works of our buildings and their more efficient and effective use as functioning schools, but also their use by the broader community and, indeed, their use to house specialist units within the Edu-

cation Department. Under the back-to-school program, all those concepts have been embraced.

Last year we saw some \$11.4 million of works money raised by this service put back into our asset stocks. I will ask Ms Kolbe to comment on this because the department has done an enormous amount of work in this area and, of course, it is very important that we have up-to-date and accurate information on our asset stock so that the most appropriate decisions can be made on their management and their future utilisation and, indeed, ownership.

Ms Kolbe: We introduced asset management into the department following the report issued by the Public Accounts Committee in 1987 and also following the Treasurer's instruction No. 1001 which was issued under the Public Finance and Audit Act. I will now mention what we have achieved so far. We have created a major asset register which was completed and reported by 30 June 1989. As of 30 June 1990 we have also created a minor asset information system which reports on minor assets which have a value of more than \$2 000. We also intend to incorporate the minor asset register into our automated school information system which we spoke about earlier. We have undertaken a standards review of primary schools and certain aspects of secondary schools. Out of that investigation came the concept of school in houses which is a very much cheaper way of building schools.

We have also introduced the concept of the one generation school where the long-term projections of enrolments are such that it is not deemed to be an ongoing school forever because the normal economic life of a school is seen to be 40 years. We have created restructure guidelines which optimise the returns of sales and restructures to Government and which also deal with the administrative aspect of a restructure or sale of a school.

We have worked fairly extensively on cost benefit models that are suitable for evaluation and alternative evaluation of the various options that are available at the time of decision-making. We have created and issued to all schools health and safety guidelines for all physical assets in the department. We have just begun asset audits and that will be a very important aspect of our work in the future and will also be very useful for decision-making about our physical assets. We will continue with those asset audits, of course, in the future. The preparation of the major asset information system, with which Sacon is involved, is also of great importance to us so that we can in future link all the various aspects that pertain to the management of assets, that is, the financial information as well as the physical information.

Mr HERON: I refer to the Aboriginal education line of \$8.6 million, at page 160 of the Program Estimates. What provision is made for the teaching of Aboriginal culture and languages in South Australian schools? Is there any provision in this line to support the teaching of the Yura Ngawarla language of the Adnyamathanha people of the Flinders Ranges?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: It is interesting to note that South Australia is regarded as very clearly a national leader in the area of Aboriginal studies and, indeed, because of the preservation of community languages in this State and the evolution of an education system around community languages and also the incredibly valuable collection in our museum, Aboriginal communities from all over Australia look to South Australia for support and leadership in this area.

We are the only State developing a complete curriculum package for teachers, and developing courses relevant to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, and that is

progressing very favourably indeed. South Australia leads the nation in this area with an R-12 structure and a planned approach to producing quality courses for all students. The courses include background information, teaching strategies, advice on sensitive issues and, very importantly, accurate teaching content. We are very fortunate in this State to have Dr Paul Hughes who, with a team of very dedicated educationalists at the Aboriginal Education Curriculum Unit, has done an enormous amount of work in this area and, indeed, Dr Hughes is a member of the National Board of Education.

Aboriginal studies is one of the national and agreed goals for education. It is part of the Education Department's three-year plan and social justice strategy. Aboriginal studies in South Australia has been developed cooperatively with Aboriginal people since the early 1970s. All courses are approved by the South Australian Aboriginal Education and Training Committee.

So far, I have had the privilege of launching several of these courses, including: the years R-7 course consisting of 11 units, the R-12 guidelines for teachers, the years 8-9 Kurna people course, and the years 10-11 Aboriginal land rights course. In addition, the jointly produced SSABSA year 12 Aboriginal studies course started in 1988. Work is currently proceeding on courses for secondary schools including: the Ngarrinderri people, the Adnyanthanha people, and Aboriginal art and the dreaming.

Also three local units for primary students and a joint SACE year 11 Aboriginal studies extended subject framework are being developed. I understand that a Commonwealth funded Aboriginal studies audit has just begun to identify and list all relevant materials and courses in Australia. South Australia will be developing that audit on behalf of the Commonwealth and obviously will feature prominently in that.

Mr SUCH: There was a question earlier relating to incentive packages. Has any consideration been given to supplying cars to teachers in schools which are difficult to staff and, indeed, beyond that, teachers in promotional positions in which the cars would be maintained at the teachers' expense, given that the Government would make a profit over time through such an arrangement and it would also provide considerable benefits to teachers as well as to the local car industry?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This matter has been raised from time to time, although I do not believe it is currently under active consideration. Of course, that financial incentive accrues only because of the ability of the State to purchase vehicles without paying certain taxes on them, and then to resell them. So, it may be that if that scheme were embarked upon very widely—and obviously it would be in terms of the schools to which the honourable member refers—the Commonwealth Government would have something to say about it because, presumably, it would soon flow on to other States as part of the contract of employment of teachers. I think we should always keep our options open in this area because it is very important that we staff rural and isolated schools with the best qualified teachers we can get. So, while we are looking at a range of incentives to do that, other than staff them by compulsion, we should keep such a scheme on the agenda.

Mr Wauchope: There have been very informal discussions and canvassing of options about the provision of Government vehicles to teachers in extremely remote areas or difficult to staff schools. Another option has been the provision of vehicles to the school for some sort of teacher usage, but I stress that the discussions have been informal

and canvassing of options rather than any formal negotiations.

Mr SUCH: Will the Minister have this matter examined and extended to encompass possibly the provision of cars to principals and other senior teachers?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I would not like to build up the honourable member's hopes because he could go off and make a statement that this matter was to be seriously reviewed. Very clearly, it is not a matter that we would give immediate and high priority to. Very substantial expenditures are associated with establishing such a scheme even though there might be some savings down the track. The precedence that it establishes for other public sector employees and the precedence it sets around the country might see this matter not progressing very rapidly. Nevertheless, I think this matter ought to stay on the agenda in the context of particular country incentives.

Mr SUCH: I refer to page 162 of the Program Estimates and page 53 of the Auditor-General's Report. In 1988-89 the Auditor-General conducted a small survey amongst 16 high schools and found that 44 per cent of those schools—that is, seven out of 16—were breaking Education Department regulations by not working for the required minimum instruction time of 26.25 hours per week. The reasons given for this were holding staff meetings during instruction time and variations in school opening and closing times. What action, if any, has been taken in relation to these seven identified schools? Is there any evidence that this practice is widespread?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: In answer to a previous question the Director-General referred to the action that the department has taken in this matter in concert with the staff of the Auditor-General's office. I ask him to reiterate those points.

Dr Boston: On the matter of 44 per cent of schools in that group breaking the regulations, that figure is the result of a difficulty in defining the term 'non-contact time'. In my earlier remarks I referred to the fact that Auditor-General's staff, in looking at this matter, had rather a narrower definition than the definition that we held. In our Human Resources book for 1991, which is now with the Auditor-General, we have come up with what we believe is a much clearer and agreed definition of non-contact time.

Certainly, area directors are monitoring the performance of some schools, including the seven schools which were identified. The issue has been drawn to their attention. My understanding is that appropriate steps have been taken to ensure that the definition is clear and that the work is being done. The department, through the areas, surveys the amount of instruction time in schools. Principals report on non-contact time and instruction time to the areas and, in turn, that is brought together into a State framework under the Director of Personnel. So, a database is being put together that we believe will stand up to the test of the definition to which we have now agreed.

Mr Wauchope: The definition of 'school instruction time' is difficult if you take a one teaching day snapshot. We have agreed, with people from the Auditor-General's Department, to take an average instruction time at school level over longer periods, that is, a week, a semester or a year. The averaging out, to come to the 1 600 minutes calculation, then has to be justified to the area office by the principal.

As the Director-General said, the seven schools that were highlighted in the Auditor-General's Report are being looked at in two aspects, and one is under the new definition of 'contact time' which includes any activity with a consistent group of students, and, if they are still under the required

time, the principal would have to account to the area office. The database and the collection of data is being finalised with the Auditor-General's Department. The monitoring of the principal to the area office is being finalised. We believe that we have addressed the issues and will have a clear accountable statement from our schools in 1991.

Mr SUCH: As a supplementary question, can I take it that the review will specifically address the various matters referred to by the Auditor-General, including the practice of some schools holding staff meetings in what would ordinarily be instruction time and the variance in school starting and finishing times?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Yes.

Mr SUCH: I refer to page 164 of the Program Estimates and page 60 of the Auditor-General's Report. Members will be aware that there is really no such thing as free education; parents are required to pay a school fee that is sometimes as high as \$150 to \$200, as well as increasingly contributing to school fundraising. Many schools are having difficulty in forcing parents who can afford to do so to pay these fees and have sought help from the department. Is the Government considering acknowledging that there is no such thing as 'free education' and that fees must be paid by those who can afford to do so? What advice is the department currently offering schools which face this problem?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I do not think that the Government or the Education Department has ever denied that it is necessary for parents to make some contribution to the education of their children. I think that, as the years have gone by, parents have contributed less to the cost of their children's education than previously. There was so little choice available that many parents had to take difficult decisions in order to access secondary education and then senior secondary education. Indeed, secondary education in this State is, for the mass of people, a post-Second World War phenomenon. In fact, there was only a handful of secondary schools prior to the Second World War. The opportunities for young people to participate in the senior secondary years and obtain the necessary qualifications for tertiary entrance have been available to the majority of students only in the 1980s.

The retention rate to year 12 in this State was 32 per cent in 1982 and it is now over 60 per cent. That has meant a substantial redirection of resources and, indeed, additional resources in our education system. It has also meant a greater provision of financial support for families which otherwise would not have the financial capacity to provide for the retention of their children to those senior secondary years. I refer to my comments earlier about the genesis of the school card and its dovetailing in with the Commonwealth social security supports for those families with students in that age category.

The school fee, the cost of providing for books and materials, and other costs which are established in concert with the school council each year, has to be seen in that broader context. I think that is generally accepted, at least by the majority of people in our community. Through the school card, no student, on the grounds of financial disability, is denied access to those educational opportunities and basic essentials for the learning programs of our schools.

Now, through the growth of the school card, many students have access to school excursions and other associated costs. I am not sure whether the honourable member wants any further details or whether the Director-General has anything more to add to that.

Mr SUCH: As a supplementary, does the department give support to schools which seek to obtain payment from those who have not paid but are able to do so? I am aware

of schools resorting to fee collection agencies, bluff and threat. There seems to be a grey area in terms of support from the department in recouping money owed to schools by people who can afford to pay but who choose not to do so.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Unfortunately, there is a small group of parents who do not want to pay those fees. Fortunately, it is a small group, but it causes concern to families which cheerfully pay that amount. Therefore, on occasions schools have resorted to the use of collection agencies or other forms of collection of those outstanding fees. It is not a compulsory fee—that is, it is not based in law—but there is a strong moral obligation to pay it. One lets down the rest of the school community if one does not pay or one does not access the financial support available through the school card. I have had discussions, as have officers of the department, with school councils, principals and parent organisations about establishing a manual and other supports to assist school councils in the collection of outstanding moneys. To a large extent, that has been successful, although I understand there are still some hard cases and difficulties in particular schools. However, schools can be assured that we will give whatever assistance we can to do that. Considerable resources are available in the parent organisations. I know the work that has been done by SAASSO has been extremely valuable, particularly by Mr Ian Wilson, in providing the training programs and support and advice to school councils in those matters. All of that is well known to school councils which have had these difficulties.

Mr HAMILTON: I direct a question to the Minister relating to the West Lakes High School and the West Lakes Aquatic Centre. What is the future of the West Lakes Aquatic Centre? I understand that the centre is annexed to the West Lakes High School. What is the future of that centre and of the instructors employed there? Last but not least, in consideration of the future of the West Lakes Aquatic Centre by the end of 1991, I ask that those employees be given ample opportunity to transfer to some other area or to be located in another school in that area. I do not know whether the Seaton High School or some other high school may be interested, but I suggest that that should be a very important consideration for the future of those employees who, as the Minister knows, have had difficulties in the past at that centre.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: We very much value the services provided at the aquatic centre. It is almost ideally located, it is convenient and it is well used. It is a proven program. In the circumstances to which the honourable member has referred, the staff, where they are based or where they are attached, will need to be reviewed and assessed, and that will be done in due course. I think, from memory, I have agreed to a renewal of the lease arrangements of that facility in the past few weeks with the proprietors of the facilities which are used by the West Lakes Aquatic Centre. The program should not be affected in any material way by the changes which are being made to secondary school provision in the western suburbs. However, that relationship between the aquatic centre and the school to which it was attached will change, and that will be negotiated and discussed in the coming months.

Mr HAMILTON: I would ask the Minister to keep in the back of his mind the future of those employees. It is important for them to know their future so that they can make long range plans, or at least 12 months down the track. They should have some indication of what their future and the future of their families may be.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I thank the honourable member for drawing this matter to our attention.

Mr HAMILTON: My second question relates to page 167 under 'Issues and Trends'—the implementation of education for the twenty-first century charter. Can the Minister elaborate on what that charter entails and what it is expected or hoped to achieve?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will ask the Director-General to comment on this charter which is being developed in the Education Department. The charter that it replaces—Our Schools and their Purposes—has in effect been the primary document that explains our ethos as an Education Department and what it is that we were obliged and desire to provide in each of our schools.

That document was issued in November 1988. Many and varied changes have occurred to the provision of education and public schooling in the intervening time, so the Director-General embarked on a rewriting of that charter, and that is now known as 'Educating for the Twenty-First Century'. It is a most important document for our schools and for our community.

Dr Boston: The charter for public schooling taking education into the twenty-first century is clearly the most important single document the department possesses. It establishes the mission for public education and sets out the process by which that mission is addressed and how defined outcomes are achieved. We are very conscious of being a department that exists for a quite clearly defined goal. Our job is to educate the current generation, and future generations, to assist in making Australia a culturally rich and economically rich competitive nation. That is the purpose of education, and that is why the Education Department exists.

In achieving that fundamental mission, we are committed to striving for excellence; enacting principles of social justice; fostering cooperation; involving the community in all that we do; and providing a secure setting of learning for our young people, and increasingly (as the Minister mentioned earlier today) for adults, in our State school system.

The charter defines some required areas of study which all people will take as part of the school curriculum in their primary and secondary education. The required areas of study are: language and mathematics; health and personal development; science; the study of society and the environment; the arts; and technology. In other words, not only the basic subjects of mathematics, languages and literacy—the core subjects which have always been there and which will remain as the basis of education—but also a range of areas of study will be provided to assist students to learn how to learn, to foster a thirst for learning and to equip them to lead a flexible and adaptable life as they move into the world of work in the next century.

Those required areas of study are matched by several essential skills and understandings which also need to be offered, and will be offered, as part of the curriculum from reception through primary and secondary education. They are skills of communication; social skills; planning and design skills for students; information skills and understandings; understandings in relation to the environment and the world in which we live and which is constantly changing; mathematical skills and understandings; health and safety skills; technological skills; and understandings of the world of work. Those essential skills and understandings are set against the required areas of a matrix-type arrangement in which clear attainment targets are being defined and clear measures of outcomes are being developed at each level of education. The result of this process for the student is self-reliance, community responsibility, and knowledge, skills

and understandings which are valued and important in the world of work and also in extending and fulfilling the personal development of all the students going through the system.

That is a very brief and cursory overview which does not do a great deal of justice to the document. It is a document that will be released shortly for public information. It is already well known within the education community in that it has been the product of extensive and wide consultation over many months. In fact, teachers are using it as if it had already been released, and that is something which we value and welcome. However, when it is released formally and copies are made available widely throughout the South Australian community, I believe that the public will have a clear view of what its public education department exists to do and how it proposes to go about it.

Mr HAMILTON: The Program Estimates (page 166) lists as a specific target objective, 'a Writing Reading Assessment Program established in cooperation with the Catholic Education Office and the Independent School Board'. What progress has been made towards fulfilling this objective, and what positive results have been achieved thus far?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Mr Boomer referred to this matter earlier when we were discussing another matter. I believe this is an important initiative that the department has undertaken, but it also involves the independent and Catholic school systems as well in this State. It is an ongoing program to assess literacy outcomes; indeed, it is a literacy audit. The results of that will be valuable for us in the Education Department and its respective systems, but it will also be important for the community. I guess it is topical in this International Year of Literacy that this focus has been given to our work in the department. It also provides a methodology which might well be of value in other audits within our curriculum, as I mentioned earlier.

Mr Boomer: We are halfway through a three-year intensive audit of literacy in South Australia. We are looking at years 6 and 10 in particular, with a scientifically, statistically valid sample. The survey comprises two particular approaches: first, to collect over a set time all the writing and reading work done by students; and, secondly, set common tasks in reading and writing. All of that data is being processed by a trained team of teachers under the auspices of the writing and reading assessment project team with the assistance of experts from the Australian Council of Education Research and Academics in South Australia, which is giving technical advice.

In June this year we released the interim findings and I think it might be of interest for the Committee for me to indicate the kinds of data we have collected. For a start, we analysed 6400 writing tasks and student performance against those tasks, and from that we were able to look at what we called a curriculum monitoring exercise. We have looked not just at what students are doing but at what teachers are doing. In particular, we were interested to see whether there was any substance in media claims at times that the Education Department is resiling from the basics.

What we found was that 29.7 per cent of language arts tasks at year 6 were devoted to the teaching of spelling and, in addition, 22.3 per cent of tasks were devoted to exercises involving comprehension, dictation, grammar, punctuation and vocabulary development. In other words, well over half the teaching of language arts in South Australia was devoted to what might be called the basics or conventions of language.

Mr S.J. BAKER interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr Boomer: The honourable member can look at the outcomes of this report and he might find them illuminating. We know as teachers that there seems to be a correlation between time on task and performance so, given the amount of time that teachers are putting into the basics, it is understandable that there have been pleasing results with regard to student performances on spelling and on the capacity to handle conventions. With regard to student performance on writing tasks, it was found that 63.2 per cent of year 6 students and 56.3 per cent of year 10 students were scoring, on a seven point scale, in the four to seven bracket in terms of satisfactory handling and results. With regard to student spelling performance—

Mr S.J. BAKER: That still leaves 40 per cent.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair will not accept interchange between members and witnesses if the witness is not the Minister.

Mr Boomer: With regard to spelling achievement, 72 per cent of year 6 students scored 96 per cent or better in spelling accuracy, and I could go into the details of those results. The interim report is available and has been made public. It is not a whitewash, because we were looking for areas of concern. We were concerned that too many of the tasks being set for students required relatively low levels of skills and, in many cases, did not involve them in more complex and creative assignments. We felt that, as the Director-General indicated, with respect to educating for the twenty-first century, we need to help our teachers to set challenging assignments that require students to use more critical faculties in their work.

I could also provide the reading results, which were even better than the writing results with regard to comprehension capacity. However, while the basics are generally very good, some students are not performing as well as we might like. It is of concern to us that more year 10 students than year 6 students seem not to be writing as well as we would like them to write. That leads us back to the junior secondary review, because we feel that something might be going wrong between the primary school and the movement to secondary school. With the movement from one teacher to a number of teachers, it might be that something is falling between the cracks in terms of keeping up the standards of writing.

The survey is providing us with in-depth information. The beauty of this survey compared with one shot testing, which looks at a very thin spectrum of what kids can do, is that we can now provide teacher development materials and feedback support documents for teachers to allow them to correct some of the things that need correcting and to improve the quality of their teaching. Overall, I would have to say that the work is going beyond our expectations in terms of yielding results. There is great interest in this survey approach around Australia and among the member nations of the International Federation of the Teaching of English—USA, UK, New Zealand and Canada. The United States is now realising that minimum competency testing is not yielding the economic results that it would like. Concentrating on minimum competency is not the way to improve the national economic interest.

Mr HAMILTON: Has a comparable study been done between Catholic schools and State schools? If so, how do those figures compare?

Mr Boomer: As the Minister said, this is an inter-sectoral, combined effort with respect to the resourcing of this project. There has not been a breakdown between sectors at this stage.

Mr HAMILTON: Will there be a breakdown?

Mr Boomer: It is not an intention to do that breakdown, although the sectors involved will have access to the work and may wish to do some analysis of their own sector.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: We in South Australia have had the courage to take on this form of qualitative audit rather than the simplistic approach of standardised testing which has been taken in New South Wales. That is not so much designed to provide some indication of the outcomes of student work in schools but is used as a political device to divide schools and the education system. It is really a primary tool in the privatisation of education as it has been used in the United Kingdom, and it will be used in New South Wales for that purpose. As Mr Boomer said, what has been done in this State is a very honest attempt at exposing both the strengths and weaknesses in schools and giving us an indication of how we can go about building on the strengths and redressing the weaknesses in our system.

Mr BRINDAL: My question concerns the Government's understanding of social justice and socioeconomic disadvantage as referred to at page 173 of the Program Estimates. Before the Whitlam Government established the Schools Commission, it did some very important research and came to the conclusion that there were two areas of significant disadvantage in Australian education: the socioeconomically disadvantaged and the geographically isolated. The Disadvantaged Schools Program was established immediately, which runs to this day, and it subsequently established the Disadvantaged Country Areas Program as a 'pilot' program. However, when that became a full program, any reference to socioeconomic disadvantage was dropped and the program was renamed the Country Areas Program, which name it bears to this day. I quote from the report of the Department of Employment, Education and Training titled 'Commonwealth Programs for Schools Guidelines' for 1990, as follows:

The objective of the program is to improve the educational participation, learning outcomes and personal development of students disadvantaged by restricted access to social, cultural and educational activities and services, as a result of their geographic isolation.

This is especially well known to the Associate Director-General who, as we learnt today, had a considerable period as head of the then Schools Commission. I am most distressed to read in the Program Estimates that the Country Areas Program is listed under the program 'Socioeconomic disadvantaged'. It is not, nor has it ever been, intended by the Commonwealth to be a program which addresses socioeconomic disadvantage. It is a program designed to address the needs of geographic isolation. Why has it been included repeatedly under socioeconomic disadvantage and not isolation? Does this mean that the Country Areas Program is reduced to the status of a supplementary budget for the Disadvantaged Schools Program in this State? If this is the case, under the accountability warrants demanded by the Commonwealth, has that been communicated to the Commonwealth as at 30 June this year?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I appreciate the honourable member's interest in social justice issues. I suggest that the definition of 'social justice' has moved a long way from the evolution of those programs to which the honourable member referred. Whilst the original concept was a concern for students from families who were socioeconomically disadvantaged or geographically isolated, we now have much more information about disadvantage in our community and can target programs to a much wider range of students who come under the umbrella of social justice, some of whom are economically disadvantaged and some of whom are not.

For example, many special education students fall into the latter of those categories, including children from families which are mobile, those who are behaviourally disturbed and those from non-English speaking backgrounds, and the like. There has been a much greater acceptance by the States of responsibility for specific programs for those target groups than there was in the early 1970s when there was very limited Commonwealth Government interest in education.

The disadvantaged schools program was established during those Whitlam years and a number of equity lines were established at the Federal level which brought about the introduction of those programs. Some of those survived through the difficult Fraser years when there was a substantial transfer of resources away from those equity programs and an emphasis on the provision of funds to the non-government education sector. It is true that some of those have survived all the turmoil of those Fraser years and are now under the Hawke Administration.

The honourable member's more specific concerns about definition have not particularly caught my attention or concerned me greatly; however, I can understand his points. I will ask Mr Boomer, who has worked on both sides of the fence administering these programs at both Commonwealth and State level, to comment and clarify the position.

Mr Boomer: These come under one umbrella simply because of the conceptual or managerial aspects of the disadvantaged schools and country areas programs which are housed together. We have a superintendent in charge of those two areas, and it is therefore convenient for us to put them together when making the books. The honourable member will know the funding formula for the country areas program. There are 107 country area program schools and 152 priority project schools. The funding formula makes it quite clear, as the Commonwealth guidelines make clear, that the criteria relate to relative isolation. If one looks at population sizes and distances from major towns, there is a complicated formula which looks quite algebraic. However, when it is all put together it adds up to a program which is quite clearly targeted to the geographically isolated. We would be at pains not to conflate those two programs and to ensure that they both have their integrity and are reported on with regard to the outcomes stated in the Commonwealth guidelines.

Mr BRINDAL: I take the Associate Director-General's answer as an assurance from the Minister that, in answer to my question, the country areas program is not being used as a supplement to the disadvantaged schools program in South Australia?

Mr Boomer: Correct.

Mr BRINDAL: My next question relates to the strategic information plan and refers to page 162 of the Program Estimates and page 56 of the Auditor-General's Report. In April 1987 consultants were engaged to review the department's strategic computer plan. Will the Minister provide the total cost of the redevelopment of EDMIS, including the cost of the original consultancy, when it is implemented in 1991-92? What was the cost of the separate development of the leave system? What will be the cost of rewriting that system to bring it in line with the planned human resources management system?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will ask Ms Kolbe to do her best to answer that series of questions, some of which we may need to take on notice.

Ms Kolbe: I cannot quite recall the exact cost of the consultancy, but I believe it was of the order of \$75 000. The strategic information plan, as indicated in the original consultancy, is developed through several stages. Like all

technological systems, the first stage is to identify what one needs. The second stage is to determine what it takes to achieve what one needs to do; and the final stage is implementation.

As I said earlier when we talked about this, we have reached a particular point. The next stage for the software in both systems is the evaluation of what the market can give us, how we will undertake training and how we will then finance the system. At the moment we cannot say, until we have analysed the information which will come from the market, what the cost of that plan will be for each year. Indeed, the implementation period stretches beyond 1991. In 1991 we expect to obtain the software for the school administrative package. The implementation of the human resource management package, like the full implementation of the school administrative computing package, will take between three and five years. With regard to the human resource management scheme, the honourable member referred to the EDMIS system rewrite. Until we have the information from the market, we will not know the exact cost of that rewrite. The system is rather larger than EDMIS. The rewriting of EDMIS is just one module of the total of a very substantial system.

Mr BRINDAL: What about the leave system?

Ms Kolbe: The leave system is another module which has been under development for some time. We began implementation in February 1990 and we are a fair way down the track. We began with long service leave development because we feel that there are substantial productivity gains from that. The system has developed in steps. From 1 July we began implementing sick leave automation, and the system is expected to be implemented finally by November of this year. It will then be integrated as part of the overall human resource system as a module to that system. The linkage cost will depend very heavily on the system's framework and the technology that we buy once we have analysed what comes back from the market through the tender system.

Mr BRINDAL: My next question concerns the curriculum guarantee and placement scheme especially as it relates to country teachers. Will the operation of the limited placement scheme create enough vacancies in the metropolitan area to allow all country-based staff who want to return to the city to do so? In relation to that question, will the Minister also supply a list of teaching places in country schools which were not filled as at the end of term 1 1990, together with a list of advertised positions and details of which of those positions were readvertised between 1 July 1989 and 30 June 1990?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will certainly undertake to obtain the detailed information the honourable member seeks. As I understand it, there were very few people in the category to which the honourable member refers whose places could not be filled in some non-metropolitan schools. I will ask the Director-General to comment on the matter generally.

Dr Boston: I believe that Mr Wauchope will be able to give us some information about the specifics, but undoubtedly the details will have to be answered on notice. In broad terms we believe that the limited placement scheme will free up sufficient places for teachers coming back from the country. The incentive scheme will, to some extent, stem the number of people wishing to come back from the country. I understand that there is some indication of that in the figures already, although I cannot quote them off the top of my head.

People who are changing schools under the limited placement scheme will need to apply fairly widely if they wish to move to another permanent position. Those who restrict

their applications to a small geographical area may be placed in temporary positions for some time; hence the need to apply as broadly as possible.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: In order to provide accurate information, I will take that question on notice.

Mr De LAINE: I refer to curriculum support for primary and secondary education (pages 166-7): what is being done to support music education schools, and how is distance education technology being used to provide music education to students in remote or rural areas?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: For some years, music has been a very important component of the South Australia education system. We are fortunate to have had a very substantial component of resources allocated to music tuition through the music section of the department. In the 1970s we established special interest music schools which have also provided this focus.

In the primary school curriculum, arising out of the recommendations of the primary review there, is a sharper focus on music, which is evidenced by the current Primary Schools Music Festival being held at the Festival Centre for a 10-night season. This is an exposition of the very fine music programs being conducted in our primary schools. We should be proud of the choral and instrumental programs and the ensembles that have been established in our schools and developed through the work of our specialist music teachers.

The finals of the Rock-and-Roll Eisteddfod were held in the Festival Theatre and televised, and one saw a different expression of the arts, and music, in particular. The department is pleased to support this program and I, as Minister, am pleased to acknowledge the very generous support received from non-government sources, such as the commercial radio station SAFM and the State Bank, for this very popular competition which is held throughout the secondary schools of South Australia.

This area will receive a great deal more attention and interest. One of the ways in which we are able to extend instrumental music tuition is by the use of distance education methods. Recently, I attended the Plympton curriculum unit for music and observed a class of students in Port Lincoln being taught by this method from Adelaide. In this way, we are able to extend this specialist tuition to other parts of the State where such teachers are not available.

Mr Boomer: The Minister recently announced a grant of \$200 000 to support instrumental music teaching, particularly in isolated areas, and the development of the kind of thing that he has seen in the teaching of Port Lincoln children from an Adelaide unit. As we decentralise our open access work, that kind of teaching of instrumental music will occur from bases other than Adelaide. The grant has allowed us also to purchase a pool of instruments for long-term loan to schools. In this way, we will be able to help isolated schools by giving them a long-term loan of some of the rarer instruments, such as the double bass.

We are also supporting initiatives for instrumental ensembles in these areas. One of the exciting things happening in South Australia is that across all areas schools are coming together to build up ensembles which go out into the community to conduct public concerts—for instance, at old folks centres—and at various times they come together to celebrate across the State to show what we are achieving with our young people in the music area. So, this grant will support also that type of ensemble work. Print music is very expensive and hard to come by at times, and we have been able to use this grant to expand our print music

collection which will also be on loan to schools. That is the kind of additional support we have had this year.

The work of our special interest music centres will be ongoing, and we have taken the step to decentralise our music and use the special interest music centres as the basis for instrumental music teachers in these areas. This will enhance the delivery of instrumental music teaching and allow special interest music centres to share their expertise more widely. Other programs, such as the 'Roll Over Beethoven' program, the Rock-and-Roll Eisteddfod and the Primary Schools Music Festival, to which the department contributes salaries, TRT days and \$60 000 in hourly paid instruction, amount to a picture of a very healthy State when it comes to music.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Recently, the Director-General attended the Cook Area School, and he might wish to comment briefly on his experience there with respect to music tuition.

Dr Boston: I have always been a little sceptical of the quality of music teaching that could occur through the distance education mode. Recently, I had the pleasure of visiting Cook for the line sports a few weeks ago. The isolated schools in that region of Cook, Rawlinna in Western Australia, Marla, Mintabie and Tarcoola are served by a western district music teacher who this year has been teaching students by DUCT (that is, by microphone and telephone hook-up). In this way, he has been teaching students to play a range of instruments. He is so good that he can even tell just by listening to the sound of the instruments over the DUCT system—he is in Whyalla while the student are in, say, Tarcoola—whether they are playing the wrong string or the right string with the wrong finger simply by the quality of the note. He is a strict disciplinarian and jumps on the kids immediately if he hears the wrong finger being used.

On this occasion of the line sports at Cook, all the music students were brought together by AM for a weekend of sport. At a function that night the children being taught by this particular teacher got together with their instruments. This was the first time that they had physically seen the teacher and the first time that the teacher had seen the students, and they played together.

The quality of music education and music teaching by this distance mode is just unbelievable. I was staggered and became a convert. I believe it is important to put the greatest resources we possibly can into this as a priority because it is culturally enriching and extraordinarily important for children in isolated locations. It also indicates the quality of some of the teachers that we have, because this fellow is quite outstanding.

Mr De LAINE: I refer to pages 166 and 167 and the very important area of parent and student participation. What support is given to encourage parents and students to have a say and to participate in decision-making processes in our schools?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Shortly after I became Minister of Education towards the end of 1985, I announced that 1986 would be declared the Year of Parents and Students in Schools. As a result of that a good deal of work has been done in many facets of the Education Department to bring about a more formal involvement of both parents and students in school government in respect of the key policy making structures within the Education Department. The PAS committee that was established has continued to serve the department well and allocates grants to both parent and student organisations and fosters training programs for greater participation of both parents and students. That work is ongoing. Last year I released the parent participation

policy and last week I released the student participation policy for our schools.

I must say that it is very encouraging to be able to visit schools and whenever I do so I ask, wherever possible, that parents and students be invited to attend as well. I am delighted to see such a strong commitment by both parents and students in school government and so many facets of local school communities and to see how articulate they are with respect to current education issues, the concerns they express, their understanding of the difficulties that particular schools face, the difficulties that teachers may face and the difficulties that the leadership of the Education Department may face. I believe that they are the ingredients required to establish a very healthy education system.

Our ultimate aim is to see that the community has a much greater appreciation of the worth of education and that the resources provided by taxpayers through the Government to the education sector are enhanced, appreciated and understood. Indeed, the community would want to see young people gain every opportunity possible through our education system. It has been a tragedy of this nation that we have not needed to access education in order to be successful and prosperous. I think that that situation has now changed quite dramatically and it is obviously very important that education is accessed by young people.

It must be high quality, relevant education and, of course, it must be supported and well resourced. That is why we need to have a much greater understanding by, and involvement of, the broader community in our education process. I believe that in South Australia once again we have led this nation in that formal participation of parents and students in our schools. It is certainly disappointing to see that that is not mirrored in many other parts of Australia.

Mr De LAINE: On page 160 of the Program Estimates I note that a figure of \$1.987 million is allocated for multicultural education. What progress has been made towards giving every primary school student the opportunity of learning another language?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: As a result of the Smolicz report, the Education Department has now established a policy which states that by the year 1995 every primary school student will have the opportunity to study a second language. The department is well down the track to achieving that aim. It is not an easy policy to achieve and it is one that many other systems have clearly shied away from. It is an indictment on this nation that we have remained a monolingual nation for so long, yet here we are placed in the Asian region, our major trading partners being non-English speaking. We are developing new trading relations with the European community, yet that has not been reflected to any great extent in our overall community.

It is distressing to learn that less than 10 per cent of tertiary students study a second language. It is important that we articulate our primary languages program with our secondary languages program and then articulate our schools language program with tertiary programs. Of course, that will involve us in a closer working relationship with tertiary institutions and the broader community. In this State we have established the South Australian Secondary School of Languages (SASSL) which provides formal tuition for students who want to study a less popular language, a language that is important to them for family reasons on the basis that it is a continuation of a community language, or a special interest language for a particular group of students in the community.

We have also established specialist language secondary schools and in recent times, through the aegis of our Saturday school program—provided by ethnic communities

now for a long period by way of language tuition and cultural programs—we have embodied an ethnic schools policy. We have put it under the umbrella of our languages policy. It has received substantial additional funding. We have established an ethnic schools board and brought about a more formal structure for the ethnic schools program and, mind you, that covers, from memory, some 8 000 students in this State. In that way we have a network of language programs that will embody our overall languages policy.

For all those reasons we have given this a high priority. It has received very substantial support from ethnic communities in South Australia and certainly from the business community. It is looked on with great interest by the tertiary sector which now has a policy for the development of language teaching in tertiary institutions which was announced earlier this year by the Minister of Ethnic Affairs and my colleague the Minister of Employment and Further Education.

Mr Boomer: I will provide some statistics. There are 37 789 primary students at the moment studying 17 different languages, and that is an increase of approximately 5 000 students on the 1989 enrolment for languages. There are still a number of primary schools which do not offer a language, but we are very confident that we will reach the 1995 target. The curriculum guarantee announced last year has ensured that approximately 325 salaries are available for the teaching of languages in primary schools.

In 1991 we will provide another 20 additional salaries for the provision of mother tongue programs at an estimated cost of \$700 000. Previously I have talked about national collaboration on languages, and it is interesting to note that, as part of a national collaborative team, the South Australian Education Department is contributing to curriculum development projects in primary German, Farsi, Indonesian, Khmer and Vietnamese, and secondary Farsi, French, German, Greek and Khmer, and primary Indonesian and Spanish through distance education. If you put that alongside other States doing similar work, you can see that we are covering the language front nationally in quite a comprehensive way.

Mr SUCH: I refer to page 172 of the Program Estimates. A constituent who is a married female teacher in the State education service was encouraged to visit a country town and found herself sharing a motel room with male teachers because the travel and accommodation allowance payable to teachers (she was given \$50 per day, but the motel charge was \$83 for a single room) is insufficient to provide adequate motel accommodation. Will the Minister review this matter, as it did cause some concern, and look at the level of allowances that are payable?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Perhaps the honourable member might have information about why the teacher was required to go to the country.

Mr SUCH: She was encouraged to go—I imagine because she was dealing with students in remote areas—to a sizeable town in the Far North of this State. I will not be too specific in this public forum because I do not want to embarrass the woman or her husband, but I will be happy to give the details to the Minister. My question really concerns the level of allowances and whether they are sufficient for teachers to maintain their dignity when visiting remote areas or isolated students.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I most certainly will have the matter looked at. I appreciate the sensitivity of the matter. We will determine what allowances are paid. However, an allowance of \$50 a day seems rather low with respect to authorised country travel.

Mr SUCH: I refer to page 177 of the Program Estimates. This matter is of great concern to parents, local government and the Department of Road Transport. Is the Education Department currently reviewing its policy in relation to, first, the provision of drop-off zones within or adjacent to schools; secondly, the provision of staff/parent car parking in/and or adjacent to schools; and, thirdly, the provision of safe pedestrian cyclist access and egress, including contributions towards the cost of pedestrian lights serving a school? If so, will the Minister give a progress report on what I understand to be working parties and, if not, will he obtain a report?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: It is a long standing issue which certainly does involve the responsibilities of local councils which have been most vociferous in their unwillingness to contribute to this issue. The concern of the Education Department and the basis of its policy in the past has been to minimise the amount of through traffic on school property. It is obvious to members that there are great dangers associated with a large number of vehicles coming on to and travelling through school property for a variety of reasons. Therefore, it has been more desirable to have children collected and dropped off at schools, and other persons who come in vehicles to do business at schools, wherever possible, in a facility that is an adjunct to the school rather than a central part of it. In individual cases that matter has to be considered on its merit.

This matter has been commented on by the Public Works Standing Committee and the State Planning Authority with respect to the construction of new schools. The department's view remains that this matter should be looked at as each new school is built. It should also be a matter that is properly the concern of local government and, where possible, local government should be prepared to assist in this matter with its well-established responsibilities at the local level. I will be very pleased to provide a report to the honourable member about the progress that the working party is making on this matter.

Mr SUCH: I refer to page 162 of the Program Estimates and page 58 of the 1988-89 Auditor-General's Report. What was the total cost of temporary relieving teachers (TRTs) employed during 1989-90? Does the department still believe that school-basing TRT expenditure is the preferred option for improving control over TRT usage rather than the development of a management system at a departmental level? What was the average sick leave taken per teacher during 1988-89 and 1989-90? What was the total number of sick days taken, and how much leave was taken on a Monday or Friday and the days immediately before and after long weekends? What was the average sick leave taken per teacher?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I shall be pleased to obtain as much of that information as I can, but I might warn the honourable member that a similar question about these issues was asked on another occasion and the estimated cost of manually going through the department's staffing records to get it amounted to tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of dollars in hours of work. However, I will get an estimate of the costs, but the money has to be found from somewhere. I presume that the honourable member does not want it taken off the staffing of schools or other important programs of the department.

Mr S.J. BAKER: What has happened to your system?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: It has not been introduced.

Ms Kolbe: Sick leave is going on from 1 July this year, but only the new sick leave. In essence, retrospective sick leave taken has very little use within the organisation, except as to the balance standing for a particular employee. Unless people have extra time, we do not intend to go back and

monitor each transaction or put it back on the system, because that is not very efficient.

Mr SUCH: I was wondering whether some indicative figures could be given or selective sampling undertaken?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will undertake to get whatever information, within reason, I think will assist the honourable member to resolve his concerns.

Mr HERON: I refer to the capital works assistance scheme mentioned in the Auditor-General's Report on page 62. What community facilities are planned, and how does the capital works assistance scheme help schools and local communities to obtain new facilities?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The capital works assistance scheme is very successful in helping to finance new facilities in schools. The capital works assistance scheme, commenced in 1979, utilises the borrowing powers of school councils and provides loan repayment assistance to school councils on a needs basis for the construction of approved facilities. To be eligible under the scheme a project must result in fixed improvements to the school; whenever possible be a joint school and community venture: be of high educational priority; and, wherever possible, be endorsed and financially supported by local government and other Government agencies.

School councils are required to contribute in accordance with their capacity to pay, with a minimum cash contribution of 10 per cent of the estimated total cost of the project being required unless special circumstances exist and then with the approval of the Minister of Education. School councils are also required to contribute towards loan servicing taking into account their capacity to pay and the life income from the facility.

The scheme has been quite successful. As at 30 June 1990, some 137 school-community facilities, at an estimated total structure cost of nearly \$30 million, have been constructed or approved for construction. Members might be interested to know that, of the \$30 million, the component that has been raised by the school and the broader community—and I refer particularly to local government's commitment here, because in this regard it has been a strong one—is 38 per cent, that is, \$11.5 million, and the Education Department has provided the other 61 per cent, or \$18.5 million. There is a proposal to build another nine of these facilities, mostly in rural communities. There are already applications for the 1991-92 year for another series of proposals. In fact, proposals are already being received.

This is a very effective and viable program which provides important and much needed facilities not only for schools but also for local communities, particularly in rural areas. I should like to see the program expanded in its scope so that other facilities might be achieved by some school communities using this source of funds, for example, to build new facilities to provide new curriculum offerings such as music facilities, science blocks, additional classrooms, and the like.

[Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.]

Membership:

The Hon. J.P. Trainer substituted for Mr Hamilton.

Mr BRINDAL: I refer to the Program Estimates (page 162) and the Auditor-General's Report (page 61); 12 schools were reported to the department for overstating enrolments in the February census, and I need not remind the Minister that this has been an ongoing problem. It attracted considerable publicity some years ago when there was a public altercation between the then Director-General of Education

and the principal of the Ceduna school. What was the extent of the over-enrolment in each case, and what action has been taken this year?

Further, a public statement was made about the penalty of the principal of the Ceduna school. Can the Minister say if and when that penalty was ever exacted by the department? Is it true that the principal of the Ceduna school is currently Acting Assistant Area Director, Personnel in the western area?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Enrolment audits were conducted at 313 schools during the year 1 July 1989 to 30 June 1990. Twelve schools were reported for overstating their enrolments on the February census. The number of overstated enrolments were: 9, 29, 18, 5, 11, 13, 8, 11, 5, 14, 8 and 5. With the exception of one of those schools—and that is one of the largest schools in the State—they probably fall within the acceptable limits, although obviously explanations are required for those overstatements. In each case, the support grant was adjusted to rectify any overpayment made in each of those situations. However, staffing levels are adjusted only in cases of excessive overstatement because of the disruption that that would cause. No adjustments were necessary in the above cases. Nevertheless, that was also scrutinised carefully.

With respect to the charging of a number of principals some years ago with offences under the Education Act, the subsequent exacting, as the honourable member said, of those penalties and the subsequent career paths that have been followed, I shall seek information for the honourable member.

Mr BRINDAL: Will you seek that information and then supply it to the House?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Yes.

Mr BRINDAL: Referring to Program Estimates (page 162) and the Estimates of Receipts (page 40), will the Minister provide a breakdown of the \$10 million sale of land and buildings in the 1989-90 financial year, and the estimated \$10.4 million revenue to be obtained in the 1990-91 financial year by site and value of site?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will seek to obtain detailed information for the honourable member.

Mr S.J. BAKER: The Minister would be aware that over a period I have made a number of submissions to the department about the fact that children who have been well served in a learning sense within the specialised institutions have been normalised by going out into the wider school arena, but the programs have not been sufficient to give support to the skills upgrading of those individuals. For example, I note that there is a loss of staff in some specialised institutions and that is not compensated for by the increase in staff in the primary schools, as shown in the Program Estimates. Can the Minister explain why it is always difficult to find sufficient staff to perform special education functions? Can the Minister provide a staff breakdown by region and by function for 1989-90 and for 1990-91?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: There is an explanation for those figures that are shown in the budget documents. I know it is easy to jump to the conclusion that fewer resources are being provided by way of the normalisation process, or the de-institutionalisation process, that is occurring. I thank the honourable member for his indication of support for that important development in the field of special education. Ms Kolbe may be able to explain the apparent discrepancy in those figures.

Ms Kolbe: The figures that are shown in relation to special education actually relate to persons who are in receipt of a special allowance; that is the only way we can identify

them. Integration has taken place, and special identification is the very essence of the integration policy. It will actually decline as integration takes place; therefore, that is a declining component. It is in special schools for the intellectually disabled that the decline has occurred.

The number of staff allocated for integration is determined by formula and included in the overall staffing entitlement mainstream schools. It is not possible to identify, with any accuracy, the resources committed for integration because, as I mentioned, that is the essence of integration. However, a total of 815 full-time equivalent teachers were allocated to mainstream and special schools. Of course, in addition we provide ancillary support in each case as needed, and in those instances additional individual cases are assisted. The 1991 staffing figures will not be completed for some time, therefore we will not be able to provide that information within the time frame, because it will not be complete until about February 1991.

Mr S.J. BAKER: I would be happy with the 1989-90 breakdown, by region, and I would appreciate the other information perhaps in February. I would like to quote from 'Bureaucratic Reform by Cultural Revolution', which states:

When organisational change represents only a small displacement from the prior equilibrium, all these stakeholders remain in place, with power largely unchecked. The forces for maintenance of the existing social system are strong. The time honored defensive tactic of passive resistance, delay, petty sabotage, and systematic disinformation, are costless and virtually riskless . . . The strategic advantage to the defence under all the common approaches to reformist attack is overwhelming. . . It can be a long and costly process, but change by osmosis, by absorption of environmental influences, appears to be overwhelmingly the predominant source of organisational reform . . .

Management knows that a Minister can become vulnerable if unsatisfactory aspects of performance come to light. All but the most alert Ministers are effectively co-opted into the 'tell 'em nothing' strategy which comes easily to the official. Once a Minister has agreed to the first cover up, the Minister becomes a hostage to the organisation, and a potentially destabilising influence is neutralised. The Minister is dragged into service as a further prop.

Dealing with change by cultural revolution, the writer goes on to say:

If the defences available to a social system are sufficient to resist piecemeal reform the obvious solution is to destabilise that system to the extent that those defences become ineffective. That part is easy. The trick is to do it without seriously affecting the continuing production of services. That requires a combination of art and science.

A number of other observations are made about the way in which an intransigent bureaucratic system is changed, with such memorable quotes as:

Allow the counter-revolutionaries no hostages . . . Be self-denying with perks of office, scrupulous with petty cash, and avoid any sexual contact which cannot stand the light of day. Admit all errors immediately; do not pretend to knowledge you do not have and never procrastinate . . . When you are confident of your direction, write a corporate plan and make it the organisational Bible.

With respect to tactics:

In the early stages, in particular, when your own resources are slim, excessive destabilisation will cause a thousand bushfires to break out, or to turn them back on the enemy . . . If a reactionary element appears to be failing under pressure, accelerate the pace and complete the destruction.

In terms of war and peace:

It may have become apparent that revolutionary transformation of bureaucracy calls for an outlook and mode of operations more akin to revolutionary war than to group therapy . . . There will be casualties but production of enemy casualties has never been the objective of sound military operations . . . A demoralised army in flight is easily rounded up, and material captured . . . In organisational revolution, there are only two objectives. On your part, the objective is to avoid those results, to take prisoners and to capture territory. Peace becomes possible when you have captured

all the territory, re-educated all the prisoners who are willing to become loyal citizens, and put to the sword those who remain unreconstructed.

It is a classic piece of its time, written by a person called John Patterson. Will the Minister confirm that that document was circulated to senior executives by the Director-General?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I am not sure what the implication is of the honourable member's statement and I am not sure whether it is relevant to the work of the Committee.

Mr S.J. BAKER: It is relevant to the administration of your department.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I do not see that it is relevant to any of the lines of the department.

Mr S.J. BAKER: I direct the Minister to the line referring to the Minister's office, executive, professional and technical (page 164 of the Program Estimates) and the programs that are performed under this line. Was that document used as an information piece by the Director-General to his senior executives?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I suggest that the honourable member ask the person from whom he got the document. It is irrelevant to the work of the Committee.

Mr S.J. BAKER: I was informed by a senior person that was the case.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Well, the honourable member has that information.

Mr S.J. BAKER: Will the Minister supply the document he alluded to earlier about the literacy tests?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Yes, I will make the WRAP program document available to the honourable member.

Mr SUCH: What measures are taken to ensure that short-term replacement teachers have the necessary subject expertise and student behaviour management skills before they are used in schools, particularly at the secondary level? This concern has been expressed to me by teachers in my area, although the school to which they referred is not in my electorate. However, this particular senior said that he had to teach the teacher before that person could teach the class.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Some differential must be made between temporary relief teachers, who come in for a day and have to fill in, and short-term contract positions where someone is away ill for a period.

Mr Wauchope: The recruitment process means that every applicant has a rating, including the subject areas. The vacancy would be computerised and the rating of the applicant would be computerised. The staffing officers in each area commence a matching exercise and the most appropriately qualified person is offered the contract.

Mr SUCH: What steps is the department taking to ensure that there is minimum teaching staff disruption to students who are undertaking critical study years, for example, at the matriculation or year 12 level?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Is the honourable member referring to staff who take long service leave?

Mr SUCH: It has been brought to my attention that a student doing matriculation has had five different teachers this year and, as the Minister would appreciate, that is very unsettling. I know it is a difficult area, but I am interested in what the department is doing to address this problem.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: That would be a most unusual situation. I would be keen for the honourable member to provide me with some information so that it can be investigated. It is important to determine whether there has been a series of events beyond the control of individuals that has caused that disruption or whether there is some other reason why it has occurred, or a combination of the two. In my experience, when each case is investigated, it tells a different story. I assure the honourable member that, in schools, it

is a very real concern to provide stability in the teaching service in those senior secondary years. A great deal of effort is made to giving every support to students facing public examinations.

Mr Wauchope: The moves being investigated by the department are to devolve decision-making or the ability to make decisions about leave to school level. The principal, as manager, is in the best position to relate teacher requirements or staff requirements to the school plan. Aside from the contingency-type leave to which the Minister referred, most paid leave can be well planned and accommodated in the school plan by the principal. That is one of the things at which the department will be looking under devolution. Currently, the principal recommends whether or not leave should be taken by members of staff. One would assume that the principal has investigated the programs and made some statements about the necessity of the staff member taking leave at that time.

Mr SUCH: I refer to the Program Estimates (page 162) and the Auditor-General's Report (page 54) regarding ancillary staff. In 1984, the Auditor-General concluded that better financial control needed to be exercised over individual school ancillary staffing costs and this could lead to substantial monetary savings. This year another review was conducted to consider what progress had been made. The Auditor-General has again concluded that there is potential for savings to be made. The department has advised that a pilot scheme of control will commence next year. Why has it taken so long to organise a response to the 1984 audit and how many staff, and at what cost, are employed in what the Auditor-General described as a very labour intensive, computerised ancillary management system?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will ask Ms Kolbe to comment on that statement.

Ms Kolbe: The ancillary staff entitlement is based on the entitlement of teaching staff to the school. It is not allocated on the basis of dollars, but on the basis of time. The principal then decides how best he wants to deploy the time available to him in that particular category for employees. We are moving towards a ceiling of two types—the time or full-time equivalent staff entitlement in each category and also the dollar ceiling which at the moment does not exist. Because this has been a problem for some time, we have tried an automated system which was found to be somewhat difficult. That system is being renewed and a different system which we have implemented for tracking teacher entitlements is also being expanded to apply to ancillary staff. As yet, it is not completed, but it is expected that it will make the tracking of entitlements and the concomitant cost implications very much easier than the previous system. We are moving to a different level of technology and these automated systems become easier to use for someone who is not very familiar with computing.

Mr BRINDAL: My question relates to page 154 of the Program Estimates and particularly to the line 'Executive, Professional, Technical, Administrative and Clerical Support' and the expenditure of \$36.176 million in that year. It also refers to page 176 'Personnel Services'. The 1991 significant initiatives section states:

- Establishment of initiatives to ensure that personnel policies and practices used within the Education Department are appropriate and effective.
- Implementation of the staff appraisal policy.

In view of those objectives of the Education Department, does the Minister view as important the effective in-servicing of the senior executive in the Education Department? Does the Director-General have a role to play in the in-servicing of his senior executive? In view of the fact that the article quoted by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition

comes from the Canberra Bulletin of Public Administration, volume 10, number 4, his question could seriously have referred to the in-servicing of the senior executive by the Director-General. In the light of those comments, will the Minister now answer the question from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition which he refused to answer before?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The honourable member should be honest in asking his questions and state his real point instead of having us try to double-guess that.

Mr BRINDAL: The point that I was trying to make—

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr Hamilton): Order!

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The reality is that the Director-General certainly accepts a keen sense of responsibility for the professional development of the senior management of the Education Department. That is quite fundamental to the efficient and proper prudent management of an organisation delivering such fundamental services in the community as the Education Department does. It is also the largest single employer in the State and it is vested with financial responsibility, and that requires it to be managed efficiently, prudently and effectively.

However, that responsibility is not vested in the Director-General alone. The Commissioner for Public Employment and officers of his department are also vested with that responsibility and in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer of the Education Department, that function is fulfilled. There is no doubt that senior management has a duty to access appropriate programs, to have the appropriate qualifications and to possess those capacities that are essentials if it is to face ever-changing and emerging needs of such a large organisation as the Education Department. I do not know whether I can add any more than that. The Director-General may like to comment on that function as well.

Dr Boston: I have very little to add except to say that clearly it is an important matter for the senior executive to examine their role, talk about it and work together to define their mission, goals and procedures, keeping an overview of the organisation and, above all, keeping themselves thoroughly abreast of current literature, research and opinions on matters relating to public administration, particularly in the area of human services. Consistent with our other obligations, that is what we attempt to do.

Mr BRINDAL: The Minister asked me to be honest with him. I have enough respect for the Minister to be honest with him and enough respect to believe that he should be honest with me and the Committee. I therefore ask the Minister for the third time, in the light of that, whether he will answer the question and say whether the Director-General circularised that particular article as part of the in-service program of his senior executive. I have asked a simple and honest question and I would like the Minister to give a simple and honest answer.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I do not propose to answer that question. Not only is it not relevant to the lines, but as I have said, I want to know why the Opposition wants to continue questioning about a selective use of a document which may or may not have been used in a professional development program which has been selectively quoted by the member for Mitcham. I understand that that document is used in many professional development contexts. It is a classic text. Why is that article and the particular clauses read from it relevant to what we are considering in this Committee?

Mr BRINDAL: I would like the advice of the Chair. I thought it was the province of this Committee to question the Minister at the table and not for the Minister to question

the Opposition about the reasons for questions. I seek your ruling on that.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: The Chair takes the view, as other Chairs have, that the Minister will respond to any question in the manner he deems fit.

Mr BRINDAL: Does that include asking questions of us? He asked me a question. Do I have to reply to it?

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: You do not have to reply to it if you do not want to.

Mr SUCH: In relation to school security, a subject which was raised earlier, is the Minister aware of developments in Victoria where I am led to believe that each classroom has been fitted with burglar and fire alarm detection equipment which has resulted in a dramatic reduction in arson, vandalism, and theft? If not, will he investigate the program over there?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I understand that officers of our department have been in close contact with the Victorian system. While I do not propose to put on public record the details of the process that we have followed, I am quite happy for the honourable member to have a briefing or be advised of the progress that we have made in that regard. The alarming of schools and security systems is an integral part of our strategy to minimise wanton destruction of our school property.

Mr SUCH: Is there any intention to reintroduce the school mark assessment system which was operated some time ago in our schools in relation to teachers?

Mr Wauchope: Not unless requested by teachers; there is certainly no departmental intention.

Mr SUCH: Page 162 of the Program Estimates and page 56 of the Auditor-General's Report refer to computers and fax machines. In June 1989, prior to the end of the financial year and the 1989 State election, the department sent grants totalling \$3.7 million to schools for the purchase of computer hardware and fax machines. Schools were advised to hold the funds pending further advice which arrived eventually in April 1990. What would have happened to this amount of \$3.7 million if it was not paid to schools by 30 June 1989 and, in particular, would it have been lost to the Education Department?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: There would have been discussions with Treasury and, in the normal course of events, that money would have been carried over to the next financial year as a dedicated program.

Mr BRINDAL: I refer to class sizes on page 166 of the Program Estimates. In junior primary years, how many classes have less than 25 students, between 25 and 30 students, and more than 30 students; and, in primary years, how many classes have less than 27 students, between 27 and 30 students, and more than 30 students?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The short answer is that no school need have class sizes in the upper bracket to which the honourable member refers. These are school-based decisions: schools are allocated staff according to the appropriate formula and it is up to the school whether it wants to reconfigure its classes and structure the profile of the school in a particular way. The allocation of teachers to junior primary classes is on the basis that no class need be greater than 25 students in reception to year 2. So the answer is really resultant upon the decisions taken in individual schools.

Mr BRINDAL: I accept that the decisions on the size of classes are the province of principals and that it may be too difficult to obtain this information but, if it is possible, I ask whether the Minister could attempt to do this merely for a statistical purpose as it seems relevant to some of the current disputes.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will check that out to the extent possible and provide the information to the honourable member.

Mr BRINDAL: My next question concerns the social justice betterment grant which some of the schools in my electorate are pleased to be receiving and for which the Minister and the department must be commended. As this system is working well, does the Minister believe that it is necessary in the long term to continue to provide a less cost-effective structure by having the complete structure of priority projects and the country areas program to administer a grant when the Minister appears to have come up with a formula that is highly successful, cost-effective and appreciated by the schools? If the Minister believes that this structure should continue, can he justify the continued spending of over \$500 000 a year on it? Those figures are contained in a letter that I received recently from the Minister on this matter.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The reality is that a decision is taken on this matter each year. It arose a number of years ago, when I first became Minister, as a result of representations that I received from principals and parent organisations who were concerned that some schools were not managing on the resources allocated to them. They appeared to be schools with a large number of the then GAS students. So, we have provided these special grants to schools according to the formula that the honourable member says—and I agree—has been successful.

There is a danger in those grants becoming institutionalised and losing their effectiveness. That is why each year we must review their importance. They must be monitored in terms not only of the programs to which the honourable member refers but also the restructuring of the grants in the form of the school card to see how these programs are working. There is still a group of disadvantaged students in schools—although those students are very much in the minority—that do not receive these grants under that formula. That is of concern, too. It is an equality issue: how do we provide resources to that group of students when they may comprise only 5 or 10 per cent of the school community? So, we need to monitor this situation each year.

Mr Boomer: The figures already provided to the honourable member indicate that at the moment 9.25 per cent of the Commonwealth funds for priority projects are used for administration. This includes .2 per cent of field officer salaries. I took the opportunity to check comparisons with other States of Australia to see whether this was excessive and I found that in all States the administrative costs are running at 10 per cent and over without including the .2 per cent of field officer salaries.

So, if there is any indication that we might not be using our funds efficiently, on an Australia-wide comparison we are running below the national average and within what seems to be a reasonable amount. I believe that the whole area of priority projects should be reviewed on a regular basis, and it is the intention of the curriculum directorate to look again at the configuration and a number of other matters with regard to the administration of the program.

Mr BRINDAL: I accept what the Minister and the Associate Director-General have said. I was aware of the figure of 9.25 per cent, but I believe it would be possible to have a long debate about whether the .2 per cent figure is relevant as an administrative cost and, if consultancy costs are added a much different picture can be gained of the true cost of the program. However, that is not the point at issue.

The suggestion was made merely because the Minister at the table, and all Ministers in this place, have talked about

the tightness of the budget dollar and, no matter what it costs, if the department can come up with a better and cheaper way to administer something so that more dollars go to these children on whose behalf the Commonwealth is giving them, I am sure that the Minister and the senior executive of the department would do everything within their power to see that that happened. The social justice betterment grant is highly appreciated by schools, and seems to be highly successful and a more cost-effective way of doing this, so my question was merely whether the department would examine this with a view to saving money and providing more money in schools rather than leaving it in administration.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I appreciate the comments that the honourable member makes. Very clearly, the department does consider how best to administer these programs. In the longer term, as the process of devolution continues, there will be a greater willingness and capacity to administer more programs of this nature at school level. That will be a more effective and a more efficient use of our resources. I am hopeful that progress can be made in this area as time goes on.

Mr BRINDAL: My final question relates to the curriculum guarantee program referred to on page 162 of the Program Estimates. This question was answered in part this morning by the Director-General and we are grateful for that. He referred to a number of incentives that have been or will be offered for country teachers. Can the Minister provide the Committee with an analysis by the categories to which the Director-General referred this morning of the amount of teachers and the amount of money that has so far been expended on each category?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will certainly try to obtain the relevant information. The honourable member must realise that we are talking about expenditure in the future as well because the programs are aimed at providing incentives for teachers to stay longer in the country. We will provide some estimates for the honourable member but the ultimate cost of it really depends on the success of the program down the track.

Mr S.J. BAKER: One of the sticking points in the current dispute with the Institute of Teachers is the matter of promotion to key teacher positions. If I understand it correctly, when I walked past the television and saw the *7.30 Report*, the Secretary of the Institute of Teachers is confidently predicting that the Minister will agree to the union's position on this matter. Has the Minister agreed to this position or not?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: No, the Government has not agreed to that position. One must be very realistic and honest with the union in these discussions because I do not want to be responsible for taking decisions which, in the short term, seem attractive and might resolve a dispute, but in the long term will bring considerable disruption and dislocation to our education system and teaching program if we find down the track that we simply cannot afford to pay the salaries committed some years previously. I know that the President of the teachers union says that these reforms can be achieved in the short term for very little additional resources. However, the department's belief is that, in the long term, as the overwhelming majority of teachers move up by incremental creep to the top of the salary range, we will have an enormous salary bill to meet. I would not like to be the Minister of Education in Victoria at the moment who is presiding over the loss of 3 600 teachers and other staff in the department and a 30 per cent increase in class sizes in some categories of secondary education and the like.

The member for Hayward talks about the abolition of the equity programs, but that is the scenario that we would face if we agreed to simply resolve the dispute in order to be popular, in a sense, with a group of teachers who would be very angry with us, and so would those who rely upon our schools having stable and effective programs, if it falls to pieces down the track. This is a complex and difficult issue, but I believe it is capable of being resolved by negotiation and, if not by negotiation, by arbitration. However, it must be made on a rational, responsible and economically realistic basis.

Mr S.J. BAKER: Has the Minister received any complaints about the current selection procedures for higher appointment? Has he received complaints about the fact that the system really does not objectively measure merit and performance, but aids professional job applicants who are particularly good at expressing themselves and communicating? Has he received any complaints about the role of certain equal opportunities officers in the promotion stream?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Let me preface my comments by saying that I do not think anyone has devised a perfect selection process. I think it is much better now, in my experience in the Education Department, than it was in the past, particularly when there was no merit principle at all and senior appointments were made from the top of the list. I believe the system is superior in many respects to the majority of appointments that are made in the non-public sector. Improvements can be made and people do complain to me from time to time about this, but I think now with the broad-based panels, the training of people who serve on the panels and the appeal processes that are available, we have a situation which is becoming more and more competent and which is engendering more and more confidence in the community. I know that allegations are made from time to time about the role of equal opportunities officers or the role of those who are elected as representatives of staff, SAIT representatives, the parents involved in selection panels and so on. I can only reiterate that I think that this is something into which we put a great deal of time and effort.

The merit principle is fundamental to our ability to deliver an effective education service to the community. I think it is a great tragedy that this was not introduced earlier into education. When I became the Minister there were deputy principals in primary schools who had been assessed as suitable for appointment but had been on the waiting list since 1973, so they were there for 13 or 14 years at that stage and were then waiting for the next position to come to the top of the list. That has now changed. We are in an interim period of making appointments on a merit basis, involving a broader based approach to selection and, indeed, criteria for selection which is formulated now by a broader consultation basis. So, I agree that the system is not perfect, but it is certainly better than it was and I think as time goes on we can improve it even further.

Mr SUCH: Given that a very high proportion of teachers at the primary and junior primary level are female and that a very high proportion of promotional positions in the department are held by males, what measures are being undertaken to address each of these different but related gender issues?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I wish I had more time because this is an issue that is raised quite often and I think that the South Australia Education Department has probably done more than any other organisation to promote equal opportunity and to break down some of the iron-clad barriers that have existed in the past with respect to the pro-

motion of women, particularly into management positions within the Education Department. In the period that I have been Minister, I believe some quite important appointments have been made of women to senior positions. However, we still have quite a long way to go in this area.

I have every confidence that the Education Department is providing women with a career path and with the opportunities to access opportunity, and professional development opportunity, in particular, that will equip them to compete equitably for those management positions. I know that this matter has been of concern to the Director-General.

Dr Boston: As the Minister said, there is a multiplicity of initiatives, but I will refer to only one which is very pertinent to the current industrial dispute. At present the SAIT position is that teachers should be eligible for promotion to the AST1 position, that is, the lowest position in band 2, only after they have completed one year on the top of the band 1 scale at step 12. Our position is that teachers at any level in band 1 should be able to apply for promotion to AST1. The position of SAIT is appointment on pure seniority; our position is appointment on merit. If we are successful in holding to that position—and I assure the Committee we will be—there will be far greater opportunity for women to gain accelerated promotion to promotion positions than there would be if the position was simply one of promotion on the basis of seniority. The SAIT posture is nothing more than that.

Mr SUCH: What about encouraging males into junior primary and primary teaching positions, which is one of those related gender issues?

Mr Wauchope: The exact reverse of what the Director-General has just explained could well apply, that is, by putting AST1 positions in a merit selection-based situation within the leadership structure of the school it will attract highly qualified and motivated, excellent teachers to move across the teaching force into different kinds of school structures. I would see that the increase in the number of AST1 positions in junior primary schools and primary schools would attract career people who are outstanding teachers. Not only would it solve the problem of gender balance in our promotion positions but also it would attract highly skilled teachers across the board with more movement from one school to another.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr Hamilton): There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

Minister of Education, Miscellaneous, \$72 208 000

Chairman:

Mr M.J. Evans

Members:

Mr S.J. Baker
Mr M.K. Brindal
Mr M.R. DeLaine
Mr V.S. Heron
Mr R.B. Such
The Hon. J.P. Trainer

Witness:

The Hon. G.J. Crafter, Minister of Education.

Departmental Advisers:

Dr J.V. Keightley, Executive Officer, Office of the Minister of Education.

Dr G.M. Willmott, Director, Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed payment open for examination.

Mr BRINDAL: Will the Minister outline how the measurement of literacy will be accomplished in stage 1 of the SACE? Is it correct that, if a student passes all 22 units of SACE but fails the literacy test, they will not complete the SACE? Is it further correct that SSABSA will allow stage 1 students to continually resubmit work over a two year period to ensure that that literacy requirement is satisfied?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The short answer is that this matter has not been resolved as yet; it is still being considered by all those groups which have been interested in this matter and which were referred to in the Gilding inquiry and the structures that have been set up for the implementation of its recommendations. I think that this is an important component of the Gilding inquiry's recommendations and it is something in which the community, I know, is interested. I think it is an essential element of our education process that we produce literate graduates.

The recommendations of the Gilding inquiry are quite novel in this area but, I think, fundamentally very sound—that literacy would be assessed across the curriculum. That needs to be achieved in a sensitive and equitable way, because in our schools, particularly as we are encouraging a wide cross-section of the community to participate right through to year 12, we need to take account of people who do not have English as a first language or who have disabilities of one form or another so that they are not discriminated against by way of the assessment processes that are established. However, all those matters are being considered very carefully in the formulation of policy in this area.

Dr Willmott: At present extensive consultation is proceeding with the Education Department, other sectors and schools. To this time final proposals have not been concluded.

Mr BRINDAL: Supplementary to that, will the Minister clarify that matter for this Committee when his officers have made a determination on that?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: It is likely that we will have this matter resolved by the end of the year. Undoubtedly, when we have an acceptable formula in this area it will be well known in the community.

Mr BRINDAL: In October 1989 the Government outlined an implementation timetable for SACE which showed that all stage 1 broad field frameworks and extended subject frameworks would be completed. However, some of the frameworks will now not be completed, we believe, until early 1991. Will the Minister indicate which frameworks will not be completed until 1991?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: First, I should like to make some general comments about the timetable. The Government believes that we are on schedule with respect to the implementation of the certificate and the timetable that has been established. The recommendations of the report propose an implementation date for SACE for 1992-93 with the first certificate being issued at the end of the 1993 year. The timetable for the approvals process includes all 10 broad field frameworks to be approved by the end of 1990. The 37 extended subject frameworks planned will be completed and approved by the end of term one in 1991. The extensive consultation processes, which have included all secondary schools in the State, as well as significantly contributing to the development, have also fulfilled the first stage of the implementation process, while making all teachers of years 11 and 12 aware of the current developments.

The Government has provided significant financial support for a widespread training and development program to further facilitate the smooth implementation of the SACE in line with the proposed schedule. The honourable member might be interested to know the resources that have been allocated for this in the financial year 1990-91.

Within the SACE allocation about \$2.27 million has been allocated specifically to support the training and development needs of teachers for the SACE implementation. Clearly, teacher support, training and development also occurs as an integral component of the developmental phase of the SACE as well. Dr Willmott might have the more specific course information that the honourable member seeks.

Dr Willmott: A number of extended subject frameworks are scheduled for approval by the board in the early months of 1991. They are general science, home economics, religious studies, media studies, modern history, business studies, geology, drama, dance, technology, agriculture, environmental studies, legal studies and ancient history. The schedule has recently been the subject of discussion within SSABSA and consultation with each of the school sectors, and it has been agreed that a deadline date for approval of all extended subject frameworks of 18 April 1991 is manageable by all the school systems.

Mr BRINDAL: My third question relates to the proposals for SACE. Students wishing to do both maths 1 and 2 at stage 1 of SACE will spend 25 per cent less time on maths than do our current year 11 students. Does the Minister believe that these students will be able to complete the same amount of maths and achieve the same standards as those current year 11 students?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: My immediate answer is 'Yes'. This matter has been thoroughly considered. It has been the subject of deputations to me, and the work of the Pitman report are relevant to this as well. Dr Willmott may be able to provide some further detail to the Committee.

Dr Willmott: It is true that the year 11 SACE requirements provide for a maximum availability of three units of mathematics. However, it is the considered view of the Pitman report and of our consultants in mathematics that this will not in any way disadvantage students or cause them to achieve at a lesser level in year 12. The main reason is that, as part of the development of the maths program at stage 1 of SACE, there will be a reconfiguration of maths which will help to rationalise and improve the relationship between what was formerly maths 1 and maths 2 and cut out a considerable amount of overlap.

Mr SUCH: The decision to make Australian studies a compulsory subject in stage 1 of SACE has been opposed by some people. Does the Minister support the view that Australian studies could be a compulsory subject at year 10, thus allowing greater options in stage 1 of SACE?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Someone will always try to find a formula to take it back eventually to year 9 or year 8. We have to accept the argument that was advanced in the Gilding report and in other jurisdictions around Australia that, at the senior secondary level and in the publicly assessed subjects, we need to embrace some component, and it could be argued that this is a small component of the overall year 11 and year 12 offering. We have to embrace the study of Australian society.

I went through an education system in which my studies were centred on English constitutional history and very little study, probably only incidental to the other subjects that I took, on Australian society. It is ironic that I ended up studying law as an adult and very much enjoyed studying the constitutional and political history of this country. How-

ever, I also have a great affection for Australian literature. I think that it is fundamental to a nation's education system to produce students who have an understanding of the society in which they live.

On one occasion I heard Mr Gilding, when talking about this to a school group, say how the symbol of our Bicentennial year was built around the arrival of the First Fleet, and so much of our year was concentrated on looking back to our roots rather than looking forward to developing our own nationhood, our own sense of being and history and our own unique culture. For those who seek to develop a sense of nationhood and pride in this nation, a subject of this type is fundamental to the attainment of those goals. I think that responsibility is accepted in school systems in Australia today.

One of the things that I have noted since being Minister of Education is the lack of a national identity of the education system in this country. We are still very much in a colonial mode. Unfortunately, there is still very little cooperation between our education systems. At a Ministers meeting recently I was unable to have a motion passed that we should have a common handwriting in this country. Indeed, there was a long debate as to whether we would keep the item on the agenda, let alone achieve a common handwriting. We still have quite a way to go. For those who are critical of that subject, I would argue along those lines.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: With the concurrence of the member for Fisher, as the Chair wrongly assumed that Government members had completed their questions, I call the member for Peake.

Mr HERON: I refer to page 76 of the Estimates of Payments and the proposed \$6.2 million allocation for the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia. Can the Minister give details of any entrepreneurial activity by this organisation to generate additional income from outside the State to help pay for its operations?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: It is probably not well known in the community that SSABSA is involved in some entrepreneurial activity, and it has been for a long time. We provide the public examination systems for the whole of the Northern Territory and for certain schools in Malaysia. Indeed, the Malaysian relationship goes back to the time of the Public Examinations Board, and that dates back to 1982. Prior to this, Malaysian students wishing to gain a recognised tertiary entrance qualification undertook the Higher School Certificate then offered by Victoria.

SSABSA provides the South Australian matriculation examination (SAME) by licensing colleges to offer the program. The colleges also require the approval of the Malaysian Ministry of Education. A number of approaches have been received from colleges to become affiliated with the program. SSABSA has approved the majority of these; however, approval by the Malaysian Ministry of Education has not always been forthcoming. SSABSA curriculum officers, the Director and the Assistant Director (Administrative Services) regularly visit the colleges for specific inservice consultations and student assessment purposes.

SSABSA manages its off-shore program in Malaysia from Adelaide with the assistance of a local consultant (Dr John Augustin) who monitors and reports on the local situation. SSABSA's attitude to expansion of the program is positive. New institutions can be accommodated in Malaysia quite readily, because there is an established operation and sizeable student base.

Present affiliation fees for colleges in Malaysia consists of A\$2 000 for the initial licence and A\$1 000 annual renewal. Student fees for 1990 are A\$95 for enrolment plus A\$22 per subject, that is A\$205 per student taking five matricu-

lation subjects. These fees have not risen greatly in Australian dollar terms over the past few years. However, the appreciation of the Australian dollar against the Malaysian ringit during this time has created the impression that costs have risen sharply.

In 1989 SSABSA had 784 Malaysian students enrolled and in 1990 this figure has increased to 971, mainly through the return to affiliation with SSABSA of the Institut Mara. The financial returns to SSABSA from the Malaysian program were \$171 000 in 1989-90 and the projected income in 1990-91 is \$198 000.

In relation to the Northern Territory, for many years SSABSA (and its predecessor, the Public Examinations Board), has undertaken the assessment of students and the provision of syllabuses to support the delivery of year 12 matriculation studies in the Northern Territory. This arrangement is annually negotiated between the SSABSA Board, the Northern Territory Department of Education and the Northern Territory Board of Studies. SSABSA offers both PES and SAS subjects in the Northern Territory. In relation to income from that source, in 1989 a total of 1 114 students were enrolled and in 1990, 1 258 students were enrolled. The financial returns in 1989-90 were \$198 000 and the projected income for this year is \$196 000.

Mr HERON: Referring to the Estimates of Payments (page 76), I note that the allocation for special schools has increased significantly. Can the Minister explain the reason for this? Is it connected with reductions in the amount of Commonwealth funding in the special education service element of its funding program? Will the Minister indicate what resources have been provided by the State Government to ensure that the quality of special education is maintained?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Before I answer that question, I will ask Dr Willmott to comment on the entrepreneurial activities of SSABSA.

Dr Willmott: I think it needs to be said that SSABSA applies the funds that it earns through its entrepreneurial activities in a number of ways. The total funds derived from this source, the Northern Territory and Malaysian, were \$369 000 in 1989-90, and the projection for this financial year is \$394 000. There are three main ways in which these funds are applied, first, to offset, to some extent, the funding which SSABSA would otherwise have to have included in its Government grant for the coverage of fixed costs and other running operations.

Secondly, the income earned from out of State programs must cover the cost of running those programs, and we do provide moderators, chief examiner visits and visits from SSABSA staff for both inservicing and assessment activity to both Malaysia and the Northern Territory. In fact, we have a reputation in Asia as providing the best service of that kind of any of the countries that provide examinations in Malaysia and South-East Asia.

Thirdly, the additional revenue generated by SSABSA has provided some flexibility to the board in initiating and developing some areas of professional activity which are referred to in the aims and responsibilities of the board but which are not explicitly funded. These include the area of inservice activity and extensions of research.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: In relation to special education funding, unfortunately, last year and this year the Commonwealth Government has reduced, and progressively in the future it will reduce, its funding to this State for the area of non-government special schools. That has occurred as a result of a report it received some years ago, which indicated that the provision in South Australia was in excess of that which was provided in other States, that is, that our

programs were of a standard than the national average. As a result, we lost funding, and that was transferred to States that had a lower than national average resource in this area.

We fought that decision strenuously over a long period and at least won a period of phasing in of those reductions. We find that policy repugnant and quite harmful to a State that has made a very substantial commitment and has made progress in such a sensitive area as special education. The disruption that that caused and, indeed, the uncertainty to those particular schools was most regrettable.

It has meant that each year in the budget process we have had to seek an additional package of funding from State resources to replenish that funding that was lost from Commonwealth resources. Of course, each year that has led to uncertainty for those programs, and I also regret that very much.

However, in the tight budgetary situation in which we find ourselves in now, it is not possible to simply say that as a matter of course that money will be made up. In the 1989 financial year, funding of \$367 000 was provided by the State Government to eliminate the effect of reductions to the special education services element of the Commonwealth funding program. For the 1990-91 financial year, the State Government will provide \$1.034 million to cover the next period of adjustment in the special education services funds. As I have said, this issue has been of great concern to us in South Australia, and I intend to continue to negotiate with Canberra on this matter.

A positive aspect of the State's cover of the shortfall has been the greater ability to implement the vision of collaborative service delivery, which has been developed by the special education consultative committee. That committee has realigned the focus for funding submission applications so that they are program-based and specific to children's identified needs. I am delighted with the work of that committee and the cooperation it has received from service providers in this important and difficult area of human service delivery.

Mr HERON: What other initiatives has the Government put in place to improve the delivery of special education services?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Additional expenditure, which I have just indicated to the House is now in excess of \$1 million, has been expended without there being any addition to the total amount of resources that have been provided because we have simply been making up the Commonwealth shortfall. However, that is not to say that changes, improvements and new initiatives have not been developed in this area of education. The Special Education Consultative Committee, which is chaired by Associate Professor Ian Cox, was established as a ministerial advisory committee. This committee has had a significant impact on service delivery to young people with disabilities. The committee has worked with educators, service providers and parent groups to facilitate the implementation of the vision to which I referred earlier.

The committee consulted widely to develop a model of collaborative service delivery for students with severe multiple disabilities. Final agreement has almost been reached between the key groups, that is, the Education Department, the Health Commission and relevant service providers. The process for the future will be that the first point of access to education service provision is the neighbourhood school. Principals will convene a group consisting of parents, teachers and service providers such as the Spastic Centres of South Australia, the Crippled Children's Association and other organisations to negotiate a plan for the students' appropriate curriculum and the support services necessary

for participation in schooling. This plan will be documented and reviewed on a systematic basis to ensure the students achieve their learning goals and aspirations beyond school.

A cooperative early intervention option, based on conductive education principles, will be established. There are joint ventures such as the Crippled Children's Association/Children's Service Office Speech and Language Centre at the Valley View Children's Centre (which I was pleased to open recently). The joint action plan between the Education Department, service providers and the South Australian Health Commission is now to be called the collaborative plan and will develop the vision for effective specialist education services for students with severe multiple disabilities. I could go on to list a substantial number of tasks and projects in which the consultative committee has been involved, but I will not do so. However, I point out that the committee has undertaken a very impressive program and it has brought new hope and new dimensions to the provision of special education in South Australia.

Mr S.J. BAKER: There has been a change of categorisation in the miscellaneous line for concessional transport passes for scholars for the 1989-90 vote and the transport concessions to students and children for the 1990-91 vote. Will the Minister provide an estimate for the 1989-90 vote or that proportion of the \$10.68 million which applied to the same categorisation as we have for transport concessions to students and children? I am happy to put the question on notice.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I undertake to obtain that figure and give it to the Minister of Transport, because it is really his money. We give it to him to spend. The 1989-90 vote figure of \$10.681 million was revised by \$3.487 million to account for the effect of the Government's free travel policy. That adjustment of \$3.487 million was represented by payments to the STA of \$3.3 million and payments to private contractors of \$187 000.

Mr S.J. BAKER: That does not help. A sum of \$18.1 million will be spent in a full year on free transport. How much of that \$10.68 million for 1989-90 applies to the same group in the 1990-91 vote? What I really want excluded from the \$10.68 million figure are those items that are applicable to Aboriginal Affairs, Further Education and Youth Affairs, so that we have a clear comparison.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I undertake to get those figures and, if possible, provide them in the Transport lines.

Mr SUCH: Given the hurried nature of consultation about the introduction of SACE and the fact that many teachers have complained about having only four to five days to comment on various consultative documents, will the Government consider delaying the introduction of SACE for another year; that is, 1993 instead of 1992?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: We do not accept the comment that there has been a rushed process in respect of this matter. There was some criticism of the limited time for people to comment on some of the draft documentation, but extensions were given in a number of cases. It is certainly our view that the timetable can be met. Because some of the processes in respect of the provision of information and professional development have yet to be put into effect, there is some concern. That will occur in the months ahead, and that may allay some of the fears. A very broad-based consultation structure has been established and, as Dr Wilcott said earlier, it is the view of the various sectors of education that this timetable can be met.

We are looking at this matter very carefully and monitoring the development of SACE to ensure that all proper processes are taken. I would be a little concerned if people simply want to delay the introduction of SACE for other

simply want to delay the introduction of SACE for other reasons and want to use some of the consultative processes and the current timetables to have it delayed. We have embarked on a responsible program, one which has been calculated very carefully. The Government has provided very substantial resources for its implementation and we believe that this process is responsible and attainable.

Dr Wilmott: The time line for the consultation process has been extended for schools by a recent decision of the board to slightly reorganise the approval process so that some aspects of consultation become concurrent rather than consecutive. That has allowed us to extend the period of time when schools will have curriculum documents for consideration from something of the order of two weeks to approximately one month. Our consultation with schools about the effectiveness of that suggests that that is adequate for effective consultation. The revising of the approval process and the planning in the past month or two of the full critical path for SACE implementation makes me confident that we can meet the time line.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

Works and Services—Education Department, \$13 600 000

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed payment open for examination and refer members to page 185 of the Estimates of Payments and pages 159 to 183 of the Program Estimates.

Mr BRINDAL: My question relates to page 185. I note that in 1989-90 the 'back to schools' program had a budget and expenditure of \$10 million, but that has dropped to \$1.5 million this year. There is now a new line 'school restructuring' of \$6.543 million. Will the Minister clarify the relationship between the two and the difference between them?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will take that on notice because Treasury has a different way of dealing with that in the Estimates. However, from memory I believe that the total 'back to school' works program is about \$8.8 million for this year. I will obtain information for the honourable member in respect of why it is shown in that way in the budget documents.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination completed.

Children's Services Office, \$53 809 000

Chairman:
Mr M.J. Evans

Members:
Mr S.J. Baker
Mr M.K. Brindal
Mr M.R. De Laine
Mr K.C. Hamilton
Mr V.S. Heron
Mr R.B. Such

Departmental Advisers:

Mr G. Lewkowicz, Director, Resources.
Mr B. Wright, Director, Children's Services Office.
Ms S. Page, Director, Policy, Planning and Programs.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer honourable members to pages 78

and 79 in the Estimates of Payments, page 35 in the Estimates of Receipts and pages 184 to 193 in the Program Estimates.

Mr S.J. BAKER: Page 184 of the Program Estimates, with regard to Financial Paper No. 3, deals with capital works. I note that the capital works figures in the payments book are somewhat different from those in the Program Estimates. Of the \$6.17 million earmarked for capital works in Children's Services in 1990-91, \$360 000 has been allocated towards the construction of the Kalaya Children's Centre in the Port Adelaide area.

I understand that this facility is to be built on the grounds of the existing primary school at Portland Road, Queens-town, about 300 metres from Kalaya's existing premises and only a short distance from the Port Adelaide kindergarten at Wellington Street, Port Adelaide. It has been put to the Opposition that expenditure on this new facility is ridiculous as it will duplicate preschool facilities not only at the primary school but also at the 60-year old Port Adelaide kindergarten which is facing closure because of declining enrolments.

While it might be argued that Kalaya provides a special facility for Aborigine preschool children (even though it accepts non-Aboriginal children) it still ignores the fact that two facilities will be on the one site and declining enrolments will force the closure of a competing kindergarten. What justification is there for a total expenditure of \$720 000 on Kalaya's new premises?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The honourable member could not be more wrong if he tried in the factual analysis that he has presented. I have been advised that Kalaya is not only a preschool but a Commonwealth-funded child-care program. The geographic location or the site on which the preschool is to be built, to which the honourable member referred, is incorrect; in fact, there has been no decision on where the new centre is to be built—and that is still a matter for negotiation and discussion. I can only interpret that the honourable member has been given incorrect information about the processes that have taken place in respect of this matter.

The final matter on which the honourable member has been given incorrect information concerns the preschool program which he said is closing. It has not been decided to close that program, but its viability is being discussed with the management committee of that centre.

Mr S.J. BAKER: Will the Minister confirm that there are two centres, one of which has declining enrolments and is at risk of closure, and that the Government would not be wasting money by building a new facility?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Naturally, all of those matters are taken into account but the honourable member must realise that they serve different purposes because one is a centre for Aboriginal children. As the honourable member knows, many Aboriginal families live in and around this area and attend this important educational institution; some on a more permanent basis and others on a transitory basis. They come from remote areas of the State to access certain programs. So, all those matters need to be considered before the final decision is taken. It is not simply a matter of closing down an existing program and building another for Aborigines, and getting into that sort of an argument—that is not an accurate portrayal of the scene at all.

Mr S.J. BAKER: Obviously, it would be quite feasible, if the Government so demands, to incorporate an Aboriginal facility into a centre that is currently under-utilised and, therefore, there would be no need for additional expenditure. My next question relates to the occasional care program. I will quote briefly from a letter received by the

Opposition, and presumably the Minister, from the Management Committee of the Bertram Hawker Kindergarten, as follows:

We write regarding the creation of occasional care programs within preschools. We understand that the South Australian Institute of Teachers is currently negotiating with the Children's Services Office regarding the duty statement for the early childhood workers (occasional care) who would be employed to conduct the occasional care programs within existing kindergartens.

It is further stated:

We consider it essential that the duty statement for these early childhood workers include the word 'educational', so that the worker's duties include the creation and implementation of a program that meets the educational and developmental needs of individual children.

What is the Minister's reaction to the proposition contained in this letter?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I advise the honourable member that there is the element of a demarcation dispute between respective unions in this area who are keen to gain coverage of the emerging human service industry. Whilst the Children's Services Office does not take sides in these matters, it is appropriate to resolve this matter between the respective industrial organisations or, if it cannot be resolved, by the appropriate industrial structures for conciliation and arbitration of such disputes. However, the Children's Services Office has, in fact, provided an elaboration of the wording of the duty statement which includes the word 'education', which I think improves and clarifies the situation. The way in which that word and other words are used in the resolution of the demarcation dispute remains to be seen.

Mr HERON: I refer to the Program Estimates (page 191), the provision of new or expanded services for various kinds of child-care. I am aware that many parents are entering or returning to the work force and are seeking care for their children in licensed child-care centres. What is currently available and what additional provision of this form of care is planned for South Australia?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The honourable member refers to the increased provision of what is known as long day care in the community. There has been an acute shortage of child-care available right across this country and South Australia is no exception. This has been turned around quite remarkably in recent years as a result of arrangements entered into between the Commonwealth and State Governments, and South Australia has benefited greatly from that agreement. It is in marked contrast to the situation that existed in the late 1970s and early 1980s. There are now 145 licensed long day care centres in South Australia which cater for the needs of working parents. Of these, 93 are subsidised by the Commonwealth Government specifically for that purpose. The remainder are commercial or private non-profit centres which generally cater for the same needs. A total of some 5 600 full-time places are available. Of the 93 subsidised centres, 39 have been established during the past seven years under State-Commonwealth arrangements whereby the State Government has met the bulk of the establishment costs.

The State Government has made a capital contribution of \$8.6 million and the majority of the centres were built on State-owned land. However, it is apparent that there is still significant demand for this form of care. The State Government has already agreed to further cost-sharing arrangements with the Commonwealth to set up another five long day care centres by 1992 as well as a range of other child-care services. As well as providing substantial capital funding for the centres, the State will coordinate their construction and contribute to the operating costs of centres to enable them to continue offering affordable care.

In this coming year establishment of three of the new long day care centres will commence. Capital and recurrent expenditure through the Children's Services Office budget is estimated to be \$1.632 million in the 1990-91 financial year. Negotiations will begin shortly with the Commonwealth on a further child-care expansion which is likely to result in approximately 900 more new child-care centre places to be established in this State by 1996.

This is equivalent to some 20 new centres. The Children's Services Office is actively promoting the provision of work-based child-care by employers and the benefits accruing to employers through their involvement in such ventures. From 1 January 1991 Commonwealth fee relief subsidy, which ensures care is affordable to low and middle income earners, will be extended to families using approved commercial and existing non-profit child-care centres.

All these developments will be of direct benefit to South Australian families seeking places in child-care centres so that they may return to the work force.

Mr HERON: On page 185 of the white book a sum of \$213 000 is shown for multicultural services. In order to respond to the multicultural nature of the South Australian community, what service developments has the Children's Services Office undertaken?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This is an important initiative that the Children's Services Office has undertaken. We have developed a social justice strategy which ensures that we can target special groups of children in the community so that we can develop programs to ensure that they access these services in the same way as do other members of the community.

Mr Wright: The CSO over the past few years has attempted to increase its commitment to multicultural services predominantly through our involvement in the bilingual program, which is a program that utilises the skills of teachers and assistants who speak community languages, particularly those of new arrivals. From the first term of 1990 a total of 7.6 FTE positions were available for the bilingual program, and this represented a considerable expansion over the past few years. There are now 23 staff covering 11 languages and 27 bilingual assistants covering 15 languages in 55 preschools across the State. In 1990-91 a total of \$213 000 will be spent on the bilingual program.

We are also involved in negotiating with TAFE and the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training to establish training courses for people who have a multilingual background and who wish to qualify as child-care workers in this State. We are actively involved in supporting the ethnic-specific programs at Enfield, the Yugoslav centre at Croydon Park and the Greek centre at Hindmarsh.

Mr HERON: I refer to page 190 of the Program Estimates concerning services to children with special needs. Will the Minister describe the initiatives that the CSO will be undertaking as part of its social justice strategy for the coming year?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This is an important area of the work of preschool programs and other CSO programs. Very clearly, if children with special needs are identified at an early age, action can be taken to provide specialist care and programs, and the intervention opportunities for these children and their families will assist very much in the integration of this group of young people into education a little later on in their lives. This is an area in which some very important work has been done. I know, from my own electorate experience, how much that is appreciated and what an enormous difference it can make to a family that is caring for a quite young child who has special needs and

who is able to access CSO programs and other specialist services.

Mr Wright: In 1989 we estimated that in excess of 3 000 children participated in our special needs program in one form or another. That figure compares with some 1 900 in 1986. So, it is clear that there has been a significant increase in the number of children whom we are able to reach. Our experience is that we are now, more than in the past, being called upon to provide support for children who are substantially more disabled. This is a direct result of community efforts to integrate children with severe disabilities into normal community services. It is a challenge that we are tackling with a great deal of vigour, because we believe it is a worthwhile project.

An example of that has been the establishment of a speech and language centre at Valley View, which the Minister mentioned in an earlier Committee. That program is now able to provide an intensive speech and language service to children in a community kindergarten. Previously they would have had to go to an institutional setting removed from the community. It is obvious that the children will benefit substantially by being involved with children without disabilities in the community kindergarten.

Mr SUCH: My first question is a curly one, I guess. How many eligible children in South Australia are currently not receiving any preschool education?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: We estimate that 94 per cent of four-year-olds receive four sessions a week of preschool education. I understand that by comparison, in Western Australia less than 20 per cent of four-year-olds receive a similar opportunity. However, I should point out that in Western Australia children start school at the age of six, so, in effect, there is a year later provision there, but that provision is not as comprehensive as that which exists in South Australia.

The cost of accessing preschool education in other States varies greatly and can be beyond the means of some families to access those programs. I think it is generally regarded, and certainly it is the view of those who make objective assessments, that expenditure on preschool education in South Australia is substantially in excess of the national average. This is the only State to have a children's services program which is integrated under the aegis of the Children's Services Act. I ask the Director to add to that.

Mr Wright: The question is interesting in that, of the 6 per cent that we estimate we do not reach, there is the possibility that some are children from very remote and isolated areas, where there is not a sufficient population base to warrant a full-scale program. One development which we have been actively pursuing in the past few years in very remote locations has been the development of play centres, which provide a structured program for children in isolated communities. I should like to list the locations where play centres have been developed, because it will be appreciated that some of these places are very isolated. Prior to the establishment of play centres in these locations, no facilities were available.

Since 1988, we have established play centres in Auburn, Sedan, Corny Point, Myponga, Darke Peake, Marla, Mount Hill, Salt Creek, Cadell, Langhorne Creek, Ungarra, Port Germein, Mintabie, Karkoo, Frances, Blanchetown, Milang, Port Neill, Terowie, Warminda and Arno Bay. That gives an impression of the extent to which we are trying to ensure that there is a reach of preschool services to children right across the State.

Mr SUCH: Secondly, can the Minister indicate which areas or suburbs have a significant number of children waiting for admittance to preschool programs?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: We will have to seek out those figures. As the Director has indicated, in the metropolitan area probably very few young people are not able to access preschool opportunities. As Mr Wright has said, we have sought out those children in remote and isolated areas and provided a program for them as well, and, indeed, for their parents by way of these play centres. I know of nowhere where there is an inability of four-year-olds to access preschool education, but I will make some inquiries and see if there is a situation where that is the case.

Mr SUCH: How many eligible children in South Australia would not be getting four kindergarten sessions per week? What steps are being taken to ensure that all South Australian preschoolers do get four sessions per week?

Mr Wright: Some children in those very isolated, remote rural areas would not be getting four sessions; they would be getting a number somewhat less than that. Of course, one must take into account that it is only in the past four years that they have been getting any kindergarten sessions at all. For a short time, in some of the more intensive population growth areas in the metropolitan area, children may be limited to three sessions rather than four. Only a small number of children fall into that category, and I do not have the figure with me right now. In any event, those difficulties are being addressed by the development of new kindergartens and preschool centres in those areas of rapid population growth. We would be of the view that any difficulty currently being experienced will be resolved within the next 12 months.

Mr De LAINE: The Program Estimates (page 185), referring to child-care services, lists amounts for out-of-school hours care and vocational care services. How are these programs helping to make sure that the child-care needs of working families with school-age children are being met? In particular, can you inform the Committee of the latest provision of out-of-school hours care programs for children?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Over the past 12 months a major expansion has occurred in before and out-of-school hours care services. Under the 1989-92 Commonwealth-State joint children's services program, to which I referred earlier, since July 1989, 51 new services have been established. They have been phased in from that period, and that will bring the total number of funded out-of-school hours care services in this State to 100, with 3 095 places overall. The current program will be concluded towards the end of this year—that is, some 18 months before the three-year funding program was due to be completed.

The final service under this program is actually being established at the Ridley Grove Junior Primary School in the honourable member's electorate. That service will be funded by the beginning of the fourth school term in October. The cost of this expansion has been \$124 500 in one-off establishment grants provided by the Commonwealth, and \$510 800 in annual recurrent operational subsidies. The cost of the recurrent operational subsidies is being met on the ratio of 85 per cent by the Commonwealth and 15 per cent by the State. This level of State contribution was negotiated under the Commonwealth-State agreement.

In term 1 of this year, a fee release scheme was introduced into funded out-of-school hours care services. This scheme provides additional Government subsidies to out-of-school hours services in proportion to the number of user families on low incomes, enabling fees for those families to be reduced. The cost of the additional subsidies, which originally was to be met jointly by the State and the Commonwealth, is to be fully funded by the Commonwealth following the Federal Cabinet's endorsement of an election policy commitment to that effect.

Most out-of-school hours care services are participating in the fee relief scheme. The Commonwealth's children's services policy statement during the election earlier this year included a further major expansion of 30 000 out-of-school hours care places nationally to be implemented by the year 1995. South Australia could be expected to receive some 2 500 out-of-school hours care places under this program, that is, based on our 8 per cent of the national population.

Negotiations on the further development of programs in South Australia will take place between the State and the Federal Government later this year and early next year. Total expenditure for out of school hours care services is expected to be \$1.559 million this financial year. At present, 76 vacation care services are administered in this State through the Children's Services Office. Funding is provided by the Commonwealth (\$440 000 in 1990-91) and, in addition, as part of the Commonwealth-State child-care development agreement, the State Government will also provide a recurrent funding contribution for vacation care services of \$145 000.

This funding will enable a number of additional vacation care services to be developed this year. Initially, sufficient places for six new services have been allocated to high need areas for services to commence in the September/October 1990 school holidays, and six to commence in the Christmas holidays. New vacation care services are being colocated with existing funded out of school hours care services and sharing the same sponsor. This ensures adequate management support for vacation care and provides continuity of care for the children in that community for 50 weeks of the year.

In addition, 15 vacation care services participate in the Intervac Program, which supports the integration of children with multiple and severe disabilities in vacation care. Negotiations have commenced for more effective coordination of the Children's Services Office vacation care program with the Education Department's vacation recreation program. This will result in greater consistency in service provision and will ensure that parents have easy access to both before and after school care and vacation care.

Mr De LAINE: I refer to page 185 of the Program Estimates and the amount of \$7.6 million proposed for family day care services. How does family day care meet the child-care needs of South Australian families? Will the Minister inform the Committee of the new fee relief initiative in family day care?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: There are currently 3 234 full-time equivalent places allocated to South Australia within the family day care program. Over 6 000 children are cared for each week in both metropolitan and country areas. The operating budget for the program is \$2.706 million in the current financial year and, in addition, fee relief payments are administered. In the 1990-91 year, these are expected to total \$4.897 million. The Children's Services Office is the sponsor and administers family day care in South Australia with funding provided by the Commonwealth. There are 14 family day care schemes, including five in rural areas, which coordinate this home-based service.

Mr De LAINE: Will the Minister describe what steps the Children's Services Office has taken in respect of child protection?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Before answering that question, I wish to add some further information which I overlooked in answering the previous question. The fee relief arrangements that have now been provided for family day care are as follows. The current upper limit to which fee relief can be paid is \$68 per week. Families with an annual income of \$38 600 are currently eligible for some fee relief assist-

ance. The new fee relief arrangements increase the upper limit to which fee relief can be paid to \$100 per week. Families with an annual income of \$58 200 will be eligible for some fee assistance from October 1990. I ask Mr Wright to comment on the matters raised by the honourable member regarding child protection.

Mr Wright: The Children's Services Office participates in the coordinated State Government approach to the provision of child protection services, and the office is represented on the Child Protection Council. The office has been actively involved in the training of mandatory reporters during the year. In 1988-89, 230 Children's Services Office staff, mainly teachers and directors of kindergartens, attended training in mandatory reporting. An additional 491 staff attended training sessions in the protective behaviours program. We plan to have mandatory reporting training available to all staff by the end of 1991. Our priority is to meet our obligations in relation to mandatory reporting and also to provide parents and others involved in early childhood services with information about child protection and access to other experts if need be.

Mr BRINDAL: My question refers to capital works. I note that the CSO office, according to the figures I have from the budget estimates, has a staff as at 30 June of 1 005.3 FTEs and has a budget for the purchase of motor vehicles of \$570 000. I further note that the Education Department, which was considered earlier, has a staff of 18 380.3 FTEs and a budget for the purchase of motor vehicles of \$1.28 million. Will the Minister say whether that amount of motor vehicle purchase by a fairly small department is somewhat excessive and whether the use of so many motor vehicles is justified by a fairly small office?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will ask the Director to comment on that. There is a distinct difference between the services provided by the Children's Services Office and the situation in respect of the Education Department. That will provide the basis for the explanation.

Mr Wright: I imagine that the major difference between ourselves and the Education Department is that we are involved in the provision and monitoring of home-based services, which the Education Department is not. Our family day-care program, for example, has 14 schemes spread throughout the State. By definition, staff are involved in developing family day-care services and they have to travel to people's homes. I am sure that that accounts for most of the difference.

Mr BRINDAL: I was somewhat bemused to hear the Director-General, at the invitation of the Minister, referring to the provision of day-care centres in isolated areas. I listened intently but did not hear him mention Cook, Tarcoola or Kingoonya and places that are really isolated. I am seriously concerned about that. In 1976 a very good and successful initiative was established by the Minister's predecessor. It was called RICE, which I believe stands for Remote and Isolated Children's Exercise. That was an integrated service which provided nursing and pioneered a holistic approach. Is the Minister aware of that initiative? I am genuinely interested to know whether the project is still going and whether the CSO is still contributing to its funding because I believe that that was a most important service for very isolated and remote people in this State.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I can advise the honourable member and the Committee that RICE is alive and well. In fact, in the current budget we are providing \$288 000 for its activities. It fulfils the role to which the honourable member referred. There is probably an explanation about the play centres which the CSO is establishing and why they have not been established in some of the communities to which

the honourable member referred. It is because the school community takes on some of the programs perhaps through a CPC-type component.

Mr BRINDAL: I was more interested to know whether RICE is still operating because I am aware of the problems involved in having a full-time day centre or anything else in some of those communities.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Yes, thank you.

Mr S.J. BAKER: My question relates to the operation of before and after school care. In the past when there has been a strike, a half day stand-down or when teachers have withdrawn their labour I understand that special permission has been given for school programs and child-care programs to operate to provide support. Has the Minister issued any directive in the case of the strike tomorrow or any future strikes that this shall not be the case?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I do not have precise information but I know that tomorrow those schools that provide pre-school and after-school hours programs will continue in the normal way—at least, to the best of my knowledge. Indeed, I think that some 80 per cent of schools will remain open tomorrow and, whilst some will not be able to provide full instruction (although the majority will), some provision will be made to care for the children that attend during the period that some teachers are absent. A small minority of schools, about 20 per cent, will close for that period of time but, as I understand it, the before and after school hours programs will continue as usual.

Mr S.J. BAKER: If a school must close, has any directive been issued to the effect that the back-up school care program will fill its place? Some parents work, and it is my understanding that in the past assistance has been given to these programs to take up the slack.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I understand that it is not possible to turn the before school hours program into a long day care program because this is contrary to the provisions under which we fund the structure of those programs. However, in the great majority of schools care will be provided for children through the skeleton staff arrangements.

Mr SUCH: I have received a letter from the Secretary of the Craighburn out of school hours care program, which has been operating successfully this year. The letter states:

The management committees of out of school hours care programs function as subcommittees of school councils as is required by the Education Department. Herein lies our concern. At present our voluntary treasurer spends six to eight hours a week writing accounts, collecting fees, banking, and keeping the bookwork up to date. If this is to be run as part of the school's consolidated account, then there needs to be an increase in ancillary hours at

the school to enable this work to be done. The system is unsatisfactory at present with volunteers already being busy working people, having large demands placed on them. We know that schools could definitely not take on this extra workload without help in some form.

Will the Minister respond to this letter?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I find it disappointing that some—albeit very few—programs have struck these difficulties in relation to school communities. In the past four years, substantial additional ancillary staff time has been provided to schools—100 ancillary staff positions for each of those four years. Indeed, the ancillary staff positions provided in this State are the most generous of those in the country and the after school hours program often contributes in a very real way to the enrolments in many of those schools, thus bringing additional resources to the program.

I expect that schools would see this program as an extension of the services they provide to the community and an important adjunct to the provisions of the Education Department and the Children's Services Office, and would expect that we could overcome the administrative and bureaucratic barriers that exist when we are trying to coordinate these programs. Clearly, they are best located in school situations, because children do not have to move away from the school grounds with which they are familiar, there are other support structures around the school, the facilities are better used, and so on. Many elements contribute to the development of this policy.

It is accepted that we have difficulties in a few school communities for one reason or another, and we need to work through those difficulties. The honourable member may be referring to a community which has a burgeoning school population and where other factors are bearing down on the school, so we need to look at all those situations and take them into account.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

Works and Services—Children's Services Office,
\$870 000—Examination declared completed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10 p.m. the Committee adjourned until Friday 14 September at 9.30 a.m.